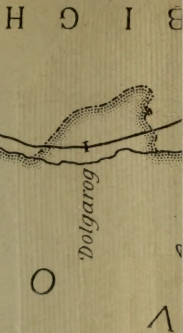


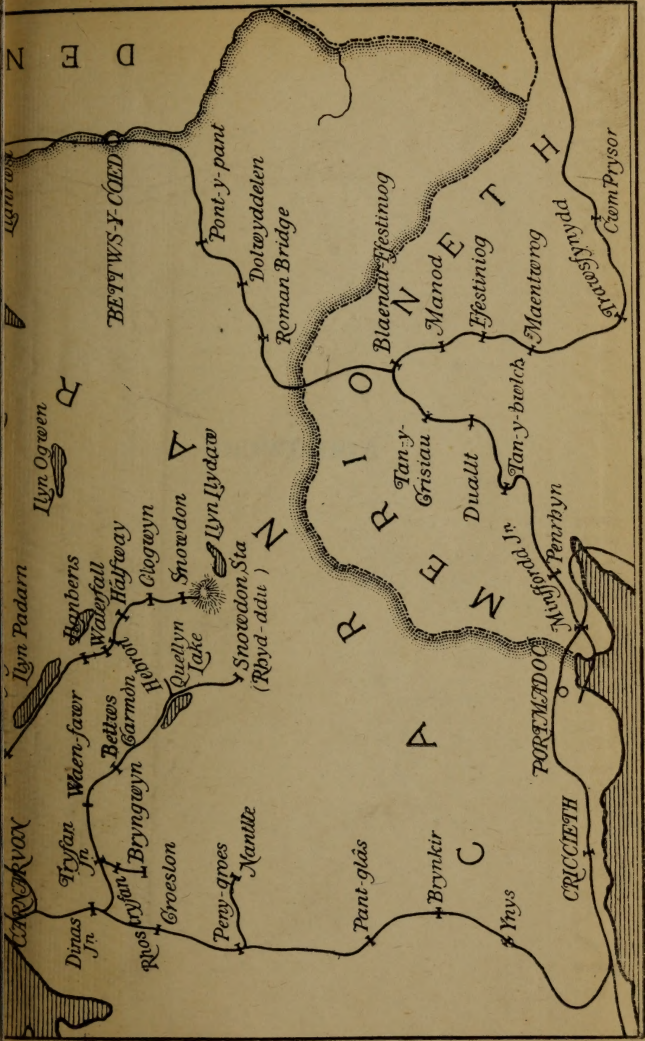
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THE LITTLE GUIDE

SNOWDONIA

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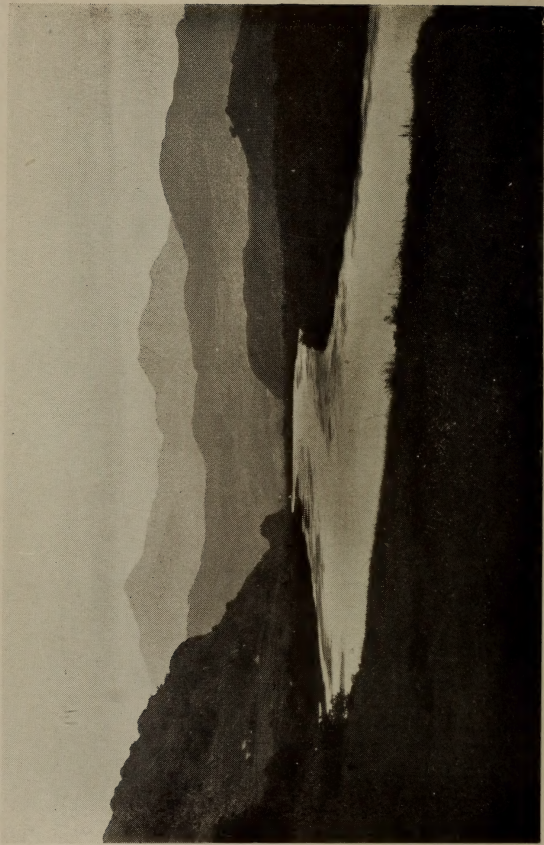
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SNOWDONIA

By

F. G. BRABANT, M.A.

*With Twenty-four Illustrations
and Six Maps and Plans*

"All the peaks soar, but one the rest excels;
Clouds overcome it."

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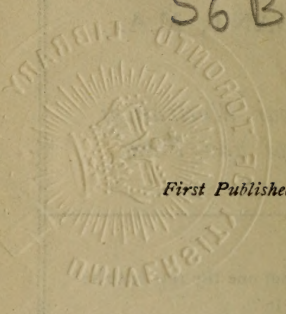
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First Published in 1920

TO
MY WIFE.

PREFACE

THIS work is on much the same plan as my "Little Guide to the English Lakes." I have taken the ordinary tourist centres as the subjects for each chapter, devoting however one entirely to Snowdon itself, and another to Nant Ffrancon and the mountains which surround it. The chapters are mainly complete in themselves, except that, to economize space, I have mostly described the routes in one direction only. Every chapter is divided into two or three sections, the first being descriptive and historical, the second dealing with the walks and rambles, and the third with the mountains. I may add that I have always on principle used the directions Right and Left with reference to the direction in which the tourist is supposed to be walking. Any other use of these words in a guide-book seems to me thoroughly confusing.

For the very difficult history of the district I have almost entirely relied on the late Sir John Rhys and Mr J. E. Lloyd, who also give much help in antiquities. Otherwise the statements in the work

SNOWDONIA

are based, with very few exceptions, on my personal observation a few years ago. For some of the photographs reproduced in the illustrations I have to thank my wife.

F. G. B.

22 MUSEUM ROAD

OXFORD, *July* 1920

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SNOWDONIA

INTRODUCTION

I. SITUATION AND EXTENT

SNOWDONIA is a term intended to include all the peaks, valleys, and lakes connected with the group of mountains of which Snowdon is the chief. This is obvious enough, but some difficulty arises in determining exactly the boundaries of this fascinating region. The limits taken in the present work are as follows. Starting from, and including, the Creuddyn Peninsula, the boundary traces the river Conway to its source in Llyn Conwy ; then crosses to Ffestiniog village, and descends the vale of Ffestiniog to its mouth. Then it crosses to Portmadoc and Tremadoc, and skirts closely the W. boundary of the high mountain group, diverging presently to Carnarvon. The main road from Tremadoc to Carnarvon may be taken as the boundary line on this side. From Carnarvon the boundary is along the Menai Straits to Great Orme's Head, and round the coast of the Creuddyn Peninsula to Colwyn Bay. It must be allowed that such a delimitation is somewhat arbitrary, but it is hard to find a guiding principle to define the region satisfactorily. If, for instance, the county of Carnarvon had been chosen as the subject, it would have meant the exclusion of the Moelwyn group and the Ffestiniog valley, and the inclusion of the less interesting Llyn Peninsula. As it is, the author is aware he may be

SNOWDONIA

criticized for drawing the cordon so closely round the mountains in the S.W. as to exclude Criccieth and the Rivals. Criccieth is a delightful watering-place, but not at all conveniently situated for those who wish to explore Snowdonia, and, had it been included, it might have been difficult to exclude Pwllheli. Whether the Rivals are an integral part of the Snowdonian system it is hard to decide. But at any rate they are very remote from ordinary routes, and are completely detached from the rest of the mountains by a flat belt 4 m. broad. To the E. the valleys of the Conway and the Dwyryd form the natural boundary, and the inclusion of the Creuddyn Peninsula is not likely to meet with criticism.

II. GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS AND SCENERY

That Snowdonia stands first among the mountain regions of Wales will hardly be questioned. The only possible rival, Cader Idris and its district, is decidedly on a lesser scale of grandeur. In England the Lake District alone challenges a comparison, which it is worth while making in detail, since it will clearly show both the strong and the weak points of these two delightful rambling-grounds.

To begin with the points in which Snowdonia is inferior. First, it cannot be said, as of the Lakes, that nearly every part of it is beautiful. The N. mountains slope away on both sides to desolate peat moors, such as the 4 m. of dreary moorland between Capel Curig and Nant Ffrancon, and the equally dreary Nant-y-Gwryd between Capel Curig and Llanberis. Also, many of the lower hills are of little interest, notably the group between Moel Siabod and Cynicht.

GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS

Secondly, Snowdonia is far inferior in its *lakes*. Certainly there is no lack of sheets of water—indeed, the number in view from the top of Snowdon is quite a revelation. But the largest of these, beginning with Llyn Padarn and Llyn Cwellyn, give nothing of the effect of the Cumbrian Lakes. About the only exception is Llyn Ogwen, which, when seen from the head, with its girdle of tremendous mountains, is both wild and grand. Of the smaller lakes there are a few which resemble the Lakeland tarns, and are not inferior in the effect of gloom and grandeur produced. Such are Llyn Idwal, Llyn Dulyn, Ffynnon Llugwy, and also two of the Snowdon tarns, Glaslyn and Llyn Llydaw. Perhaps also about six others might be mentioned.¹ But most of these sheets of water lie tamely on the open moorland. Very few show also the softer features of woodland and meadow. Of such the best are Llyn Gwynant, Llyn y Ddinas and Llyn Crafnant.

Thirdly, the *views* from the Carnarvonshire mountains are little varied; indeed, they are in all cases essentially the same—*i.e.* most of the other Snowdonian peaks; to the W. the flat country, the Menai Straits, Anglesey and the sea; to the E. the Denbigh hills; to the S.E. the Berwyns and the Cader Idris district. The best views are from the mountains surrounding Nant Ffrancon, where the valley itself makes a splendid foreground. The next best views, in the writer's opinion, are gained from the S.W. group of mountains, beyond the two valleys reaching from Beddgelert to Carnarvon. From here the central mountains group best, and the foreground is usually good.

Lastly, in recounting the drawbacks of Snowdonia, it is impossible not to refer to the havoc wrought by

¹ Marchllyn, Llyn Cowlyd, Llyn Bochlwyd, Llyn-an-Afon, Llyn Trwstyllon, and Melynlllyn.

SNOWDONIA

the slate and granite quarries at Penmaenmawr, Llanberis, Bethesda and Ffestiniog, which is far worse than any corresponding damage done to the English Lakes.

Turning to the other side of the picture, there are only two points in which Snowdonia can claim a decided advantage. One of these, however, is the most important of all, the *mountains* themselves. The scale is felt at once to be a grander one. The central mountain mass is both higher and more extensive than anything Lakeland has to show. Instead of the four mountains which rise above the 3000 ft., Snowdonia has to show ten,¹ the highest of which, Snowdon itself, is 360 ft. higher than Scawfell Pikes. In grandeur and beauty Snowdon again is easily first of the group, and finer than any Lakeland mountain. Other mountains conspicuous for beauty of form are Tryfaen, a sheer rock pyramid, Elidyr Fawr, whose narrow roof-like summit, when seen from either end, takes a perfect conical shape, and Cynicht, which is also a clear-cut cone when seen from the S.W. Of the rest, Moel Siabod and Pen Llithrig have strikingly graceful outlines, the Glyders are unsurpassed for their wild rock-strewn summits, and Y Garn and Y Foel Goch overhang the Nant Ffrancon in effectively shaped masses. The N. part of the mountain range exhibits less variety, and is, in some aspects, heavy.

Another advantage can be claimed at any rate for the N. part of the district, the neighbourhood of the *sea*. In Lakeland the sea forms a background for the view, but is rarely close at hand. But in the N. of Snowdonia the visitor can dwell by the sea itself at Llandudno, Conway, Penmaenmawr and Llanfair-

¹ Or indeed fourteen, if we consider Glyder Fach, Yr Elen, Crib Goch, and Crib y Ddysgl as separate mountains.

GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS

fechan, and find plenty of delightful rambles in the mountains behind them, which, though not of the highest, yet command beautiful sea views. A great part of the charm lies in the three fine headlands of Great Orme, Penmaen Bach and Penmaen Mawr. S. of the latter the main line of the mountains recedes from the coast, and the sea narrows into the Menai Straits, the long winding line of which adds a unique feature of beauty to the district, and greatly increases the attractions of Bangor and Carnarvon, which otherwise lie somewhat apart from the main centres of interest. The view, for instance, from Garth Pier at Bangor is, of its kind, almost unequalled. After the Straits are left behind, the sea coast of Carnarvonshire bends round the long narrow Llyn Peninsula into the N. part of Cardigan Bay, over which fine views can be got from the S. mountains, while from all the central mountains wide stretches of sea are seen in three or four directions, and the whole of Anglesey is spread before us like a map.

In other respects it is more difficult to compare the two regions. Snowdonia is very famous for its *valleys*, but these are not as a rule of the Lakeland type, except indeed Nant Gwynant, just E. of Snowdon. They lie mostly to the E. of the district, apart from the higher mountains, and surrounded by hills, lower indeed, but steep, rocky and well-wooded. Their chief beauty is due to the lovely streams which descend them. Such are the four famous river valleys which converge at Bettws-y-Coed, and the valley of the Dwyryd, better known as the Ffestiniog valley.

In *passes* Snowdonia makes up for quantity by quality. Of passes in the strict Lakeland sense there is scarcely one. But nothing in the district is finer than the two so-called Llanberis and Nant Ffrancon

SNOWDONIA

Passes, two enormous rents torn straight through the very heart of the mountain mass, where the roads are bordered by gigantic and almost perpendicular crags on both sides for miles. The Pass of Aberglaslyn is the gorge by which the Glaslyn stream has forced a passage to the sea. It is hardly more than $\frac{1}{4}$ m. long, and gives only one view, which, however, is as exquisite as anything in Wales. Other passes are the Sychnant, remarkably effective, considering the small height of the surrounding hills, the Bwlch-y-Ddeufaen, an ancient Roman track more of the type of the Lakeland pass, the Drws-y-Coed (leading from Rhyd-ddu to Nantlle), a narrow cañon with precipitous sides, and the road between the Lledr and Ffestiniog valleys.

Of the *waterfalls* of Snowdonia it may perhaps be said that they contain more water than the Lakeland ones, but are not so finely draped in foliage. Most of the waterfalls are found (1) on the streams which unite to form the Conway, or descend to join it later in its course, (2) on the tributaries of the Dwyryd. In the heart of the mountains waterfalls are rare. Exceptions are the Aber Falls, the falls of the Ogwen, and Ceunant Mawr at Llanberis.

To this comparison nothing need be added except a general account of the lie of the mountains and of the river-system. It is usual to base the first on a slight sketch of geology, but the geology of Carnarvonshire is too difficult to afford much light, except to specialists. A few facts, however, may be stated. The county is almost entirely built up of the most ancient rocks in the British Isles. Nearly the whole of the mountain region, including the main ridge throughout, and all but a few of the highest summits, belongs to the *Lower Silurian* strata, now usually called *Ordovician*. But most of its grandeur and beauty is

GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS

due to the vast intrusive masses of igneous rocks of all kinds, consisting of the ashes and lava thrown up by long-continued eruptions, out of which materials alike lofty summits and steep precipices have been carved. N.W. of this, between Nantlle and Aber, there runs a belt of the still older *Cambrian* formation, which includes only one of the great mountains, Elidyr Fawr. On this area are the great slate beds, which are worked in the quarries of Nantlle, Llanberis and Bethesda. Of the oldest rocks of all, called *pre-Cambrian*, there are two strips inside the county, one between Bangor and Carnarvon, including the little Twt Hill, the other in the Llyn Peninsula. Later rocks are only found in the extreme N. of the district. The *Upper Silurian* strata cross to the E. of the Conway for a few miles of its lower course, and most of the Creuddyn Peninsula, including the two Orme's Heads, consists of *mountain limestone*.

The mountain range in the N., where it starts, is comparatively narrow, but broadens out considerably in the central district of the highest mountains. Here it is divided into three distinct parts by the deeply-cut passes of Nant Ffrancon and Llanberis.

The first or N. part has a continuous summit level, stretching from Conway to the heart of Nant Ffrancon. At first the mountain range is narrow, and only about 800 ft. high; then it lifts up to the rocky summit of Tal-y-Fan (2000 ft.). A slight dip follows to the Bwlch-y-Ddeufaen Pass, the only break in the chain, and then there is a still more considerable rise to Y Foel Fras, the first of the giants (over 3000 ft.). The summit level now broadens awhile, and the height is kept up till the ridge lifts up yet another 500 ft. to the twin mountains of Carnedd Llewelyn and Carnedd Dafydd, second only in height to Snowdon. The

SNOWDONIA

great arm of Carnedd Dafydd called Braich Ddu stretches S., with hardly any loss of height, until it descends precipitously to the Nant Ffrancon.

The second or central part lies between the Nant Ffrancon and the pass and valley of Llanberis. It consists of a long line of mountains stretching from Capel Curig to Bethesda, with an axis about at right angles to that of the part already described. Starting from Capel Curig the ridge lifts gradually up to the mighty Glyders, the third greatest mountain mass in Snowdonia, with Tryfaen to the R. Next come Y Garn and Y Foel Goch, overlooking Nant Ffrancon, and the Elidrys, overlooking Llanberis. The range is continued by Carnedd y Filiast and then drops steeply to Bethesda.

The third or S. part is S. of the Llanberis Pass. From the two extreme ends of the Llanberis road two roads diverge S. to meet at Beddgelert. That to the E. descends the Nant Gwynant; that to the W. first ascends the Gwyrfai valley, and then, crossing a low watershed, descends the valley of the Colwyn. These three roads enclose a triangle, which is almost completely filled by the mighty mass of Snowdon, but includes also the lesser range of Moel Eilio. S. of Snowdon there are no more mountains over 3000 ft. To the E. of the triangle there is a range of mountains stretching from Moel Siabod to Cynicht and Moelwyn, but the intervening heights are of less interest. On the W. of the triangle is another range, first Mynydd Mawr, then the long ridge culminating in Y Garnedd Goch, and finally Moel Hebog and Moel Ddu, overlooking Beddgelert valley and the Traeth Mawr respectively.

A short description of the *river-system* may conclude this account. The principal river is the Conway.

GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS

The mountain group of which Cynicht and Moelwyn are the most striking features is continued E. by a line of lofty but not particularly interesting heights, which unite Snowdonia with the broad plateau of N. Merioneth. From the N. slopes of this range there descend three lovely mountain streams, the Lledr, the Machno, and the Conway itself, which flows from the large tarn Llyn Conwy. Near Bettws-y-Coed the three unite and are joined by a fourth and equally beautiful stream, the Llugwy, flowing from the E. slopes of Carnedd Llewelyn. The united streams form the Conway, which soon becomes tidal, and flows in a very definite valley, forming the E. boundary of Snowdonia. It receives on the L. bank several important tributaries. At Tal-y-Cafn it expands into a wide estuary, which, after passing Conway, curiously narrows again at its mouth near Deganwy.

Of the streams flowing W. none are really large. The principal are (1) the pretty Aber stream, formed by the junction of two branches flowing from the slopes of Y Foel Fras ; (2) the Ogwen, which passes through Llyn Ogwen, and descends the Nant Ffrancon past Bethesda ; (3) the Seiont, or Saint, which flows from the Pass of Llanberis, through the lakes of Peris and Padarn to Carnarvon ; (4) the Gwyrfai, which rises in Llyn y Gader near Rhyd-ddu, and then flows through Llyn Cwellyn and between Moel Eilio and Mynydd Mawr.

Flowing S. are (1) the Glaslyn, which rises in Cwm Duli in Snowdon, and descends Nant Gwynant, passing through four lakes. At Beddgelert it is joined by the Colwyn, and the united streams flow through the Pass of Aberglaslyn to Traeth Mawr and Cardigan Bay ; (2) the Dwyryd, which traverses the beautiful vale of Ffestiniog past Maentwrog to the sea.

SNOWDONIA

III. CLIMATE

1. *Rainfall*.—Charming as Snowdonia is, it has certainly the disadvantage of being very wet, since, owing to its W. position, it is in the direct track of the rain-bearing S.W. winds from the Atlantic. The driest part is in the strip of flat land by the Menai Straits, on which the annual rainfall is from 35 to 40 in., as compared with the 25 to 30 in. of the E. and midland counties. Thus at Carnarvon the rainfall is 35 in., at Penmaenmawr 37 in., at Llanfairfechan 38 in., and at Bangor 39 in. Portmadoc, on the S. coast, is considerably wetter, having an average of 56 in. But as we move inland, and come into the shadow of the high mountains, the average rainfall rapidly increases, being 61 in. at Bethesda and 76 at Llanberis. Then we come to the mountains themselves, on which the rainfall reaches its maximum, being in many places over 100 in. The wettest spots are all on the landward, *i.e.* the E., side of the highest peaks. Thus at Llyn Dulyn under Y Foel Fras the record is 94 in. ; at Llyn Eigiau under Carnedd Llewelyn it is 110 in. ; and at Pen y Gwryd 136 in. The highest records of all are in Cwm Duli, E. of Snowdon, in which there are three spots which have an average of from 170 to 185 in., and seriously dispute the claim of the Styne in Borrowdale to be the wettest point in England and Wales.¹

¹ The whole of Cwm Duli has only been under strict observation since 1908, so that it is too early to decide between it and the Styne. So far the Styne seems to hold a slight superiority. All the figures in this section are taken from *British Rainfall*, and the averages calculated, as a rule, from 1900 to 1914. Before the 20th century the records of Carnarvonshire rainfall are few.

COMMUNICATIONS

When we leave the mountains behind, and descend to the valley at Bettws-y-Coed, the average sinks to 52. The Creuddyn Peninsula stands apart from the general climatic conditions of Snowdonia, so that Llandudno has a steady rainfall of only 31 in. and Deganwy of 30 in.

2. *Temperature*.—In Snowdonia the proximity of the sea has its usual effect of allaying both summer heat and winter cold. The effect is most pronounced in winter, when the warm winds and waters from the Atlantic make the air milder than in any of the South Coast towns E. of Weymouth, an advantage, it may be added, which is shared by the whole Welsh coast. Strictly speaking these statements only apply to the districts on the sea level. If we ascend the mountains the air grows colder, the temperature diminishing one degree Fahrenheit for every 270 ft. of altitude. This fact is worth remembering in summer, if the valleys grow hot and airless.

3. *Sunshine*.—A region with so plentiful a supply of clouds and mist, formed by the condensation of the vapour in the S.W. winds, is not likely to be specially favoured with sunshine; and the visitor must not expect the brightness of the E. and S.E. coasts. On some days the mountains are certain to be wrapped in mist, even when there is no rain. But when the fine day comes, the intense brightness and clear atmosphere make up for everything. Also the most wonderful mountain effects are those seen when the mists are breaking.

IV. COMMUNICATIONS

The earliest roads in the district seem to have been the Roman ones, *i.e.* that across the Bwlch-y-

SNOWDONIA

Ddeufaen ; and Sarn Helen, up the Conway valley. During the time of Welsh independence roads were little made, since the inaccessibility of the mountain region distinctly made for safety. Even after the English Conquest there were for centuries no facilities for wheeled traffic. In the 16th century a post was established to Ireland by way of Holyhead. The perils of this journey soon became notorious. It involved a ferry at Conway, a dangerous narrow road round the slopes of Penmaen Mawr, and the crossing of the Lavan sands at low water to the ferry at Beaumaris (pp. 76, 83). It was not till about 1770 that a safe road was constructed round Penmaen Mawr. Early in the 19th century the Irish mail was diverted to the great road constructed by Telford, which passes Bettws-y-Coed and Capel Curig, and then crosses the mountains by the Nant Ffrancon to Bangor, continuing by the Bangor ferry to Anglesey. About the same time roads were constructed from Carnarvon over the Llanberis Pass to Capel Curig, and from Carnarvon to Beddgelert. A little later the addition of the road from Beddgelert to Pen y Gwryd completed the triangle of roads round Snowdon. The year 1826 saw a great improvement in communication by the construction of the two Suspension Bridges over the Conway and the Menai Straits. But five-and-twenty years later the advent of the railway caused a still greater change, and the Tubular Bridges over the Conway and the Straits took their place by the side of the Suspension Bridges. The result has been that the Irish mails again go by Conway, and after passing Penmaenmawr by a tunnel, proceed viâ Bangor into Anglesey.

The present road system of the district was completed about 1830, and may easily be summed up. To the E. two roads, starting from Conway, run up

COMMUNICATIONS

the Conway valley. That on the E. side, after passing Bettws-y-Coed turns L. over the moors to Corwen. That on the W., after Bettws-y-Coed, ascends the Lledr valley, crosses by a high pass to the Ffestiniog valley, which it descends, and then proceeds S. out of the district. On the W. of the district two roads start from Conway, one over the Sychnant Pass, the other by the coast round Penmaen Bach. These unite at Penmaenmawr, and the joint road is now carried round Penmaenmawr to Llanfairfechan and then proceeds to Bangor and Carnarvon. From Carnarvon the only road we need consider runs by Beddgelert and the Aberglaslyn Pass to Portmadoc. There are only two cross roads across the mountains, both of which start from Bettws-y-Coed, but diverge at Capel Curig. The N. branch (Telford's road) traverses the Nant Ffrancon to Bangor; the S. branch goes over the Llanberis Pass to Carnarvon. Just before reaching the Pass it throws off a branch S. to Beddgelert down the Nant Gwynant. Owing to the heavy demands of the tourist traffic, all the roads mentioned are kept in excellent condition. The only exceptions are the two cross roads, from Capel Curig to the summits of the passes, which are usually very loose and rough. When the descent W. begins, the roads improve at once.

For the railway system, see map. All the places which lie E. and W. of the mountain ranges can readily be reached by train. There are also two branch lines which run up into the mountains, Bangor to Bethesda and Carnarvon to Llanberis. Beddgelert also lies at present 4 m. from the terminus of a light railway from Carnarvon, which, however, will soon be prolonged through Beddgelert to Portmadoc. At present road traffic is rather in a transition state. The coach has been superseded by the motor bus, but

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the service of the latter is not yet fully organized. It is probable that in a few years the present difficulties of travelling with luggage to and from Beddgelert, Pen-y-Gwryd and Ogwen Cottage will disappear.¹

The steamers which, in the summer months, traverse the Menai Straits from Llandudno to Carnarvon are a great addition to the pleasure of the district. Small steamers also sail up the river Conway to Trefriw.

V. INDUSTRIES AND POPULATION

1. *Agriculture*.—Very little corn is grown in the district, and such as there is consists mainly of oats and barley. Wheat is scarcely found at all, both climate and soil being as unfavourable to it as in Lakeland. The valleys and lowlands generally are given up to pasture, on which graze the fine black cattle of N. Wales, with their long horns and glossy skins. But the larger half of the district is uncultivated moor and mountain, over which there roam freely the small hardy Welsh sheep, even more famous for mutton than the black cattle are for beef. Every sheep is known to its master by a special ear-mark, and the dogs show wonderful sagacity in collecting their own flocks. Scattered among the sheep are a considerable number of small mountain ponies. Fruit, flowers and vegetables are not much cultivated.

2. *Mining and Quarrying*.—Manufactures are non-

¹ In 1913 there was a motor service from Bettws-y-Coed to Llanberis, but none through the Nant Ffrancon, nor between Pen-y-Gwryd, Beddgelert and Portmadoc. The writer is not aware of subsequent changes, but probably there has been little development as yet (1920).

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existent, and the principal industry is quarrying, which finds work for the larger half of the labourers. Slate quarrying was introduced by the first Baron Penrhyn in 1782, when he started in the Ogwen valley the quarries which bear his name and now employ 2000 men. A little later Mr Assheton Smith started the Dinorwic quarries at Llanberis, now employing 2800 men. Other centres of quarrying activity, hardly if at all inferior, are in the valleys of Ffestiniog and Nantlle. The slates are of the familiar blue pattern, used largely for tiling, but hardly as pleasing to the eye as they are useful. It is not too much to say that nearly every town and village in Snowdonia has its picturesqueness damaged by the indiscriminate use of blue slates for roofs. Granite quarrying is largely carried on at Penmaenmawr, and is rapidly destroying the beauty of that mountain. On the general bad effects of quarrying on the scenery, enough is said in the body of this work. Mining has of late been unsuccessful, and most mines have been closed—for instance, the copper mine in Cwm Duli on Snowdon, which, however, has left ugly scars behind. There is a copper mine still working at Drws-y-Coed, and there are lead and zinc mines in the Conway valley.

3. *Shipping and Fisheries.*—The sea-ports of the district are mainly concerned in exporting the quarried slate and stone. Thus the Penrhyn slate is exported from Bangor, the Llanberis from Port Dinorwic, the Nantlle from Carnarvon, and the Ffestiniog from Portmadoc. Apart from this the maritime industries are very small. It is quite remarkable how very little the Welsh have taken to fishing, considering the wide extent of coast, off which many kinds of fish are to be found in abundance. The mouth of the Conway

has long been famed for the pearl-mussel, alluded to by Spenser :

Conway, which out of his streame doth send
Plenty of perles to decke his dames withall.

These statements may be illustrated by a very few facts concerning the population. Between 1801 and 1911 the population of Carnarvonshire (which may be taken as the most convenient unit) rose from 41,521 to 125,049. Apart from the general causes to which the increase of population in Great Britain during the 19th century is due, the two special causes, to which this rise is to be attributed, are the development of quarrying and the increased number of summer visitors, leading especially to the rise of watering-places. Thus the population is thickest along the coast, on which the three most populous towns are the old boroughs of Bangor (11,236) and Carnarvon (9119), and the new watering-place of Llandudno (10,469). The valleys in which quarrying is carried on are also populous, the four districts, of which Bethesda, Llanberis, Nantlle, and Ffestiniog are centres, accounting each for between 8000 and 11,000 inhabitants. In the purely agricultural valleys the population is comparatively thin, and very thin and scattered among the bare moors and mountains. Llanrwst, perhaps the largest agricultural centre, has only a population of 2519.

VI. ETHNOLOGY AND LANGUAGE

The successive swarms of settlers, who crossed from the Continent to England in early times, naturally pushed their predecessors northward and westward.

ETHNOLOGY AND LANGUAGE

We may therefore expect to find in N. Wales traces of the oldest peoples which have inhabited this island. The three main races which have gone to the making of the Welsh are :

(1) The *Iberians*, belonging to the Neolithic Age, a small, swarthy race, of a type still common in Snowdonia, especially in the more out-of-the-way districts such as Beddgelert.

(2) The *Goidelic*, a branch of the Celtic race, akin to the Picts and Scots who dwelt in the Highlands of Scotland and in Ireland. They were tall and fair, and invaded N. Wales in the Bronze Age.

(3) The *Brythonic*, or Britons, another branch of Celts, who had conquered England, and discovered the use of iron, before Julius Cæsar invaded them. By that time they had penetrated but little into Wales, and not at all into Snowdonia. But after the Romans left, the Brythons invaded N. Wales, and quickly became the dominant race, the previous settlers amalgamating with them under the name of Cymry, or "Comrades," a word not in use until the 5th century. After this there occurred no important modification of Welsh nationality.

The Welsh language, spoken by the united Cymry, is really that of the Brythons, and has continued the spoken language up to this day. At present about 10 per cent. of the population of Carnarvonshire speak English only ; about 40 per cent. speak both Welsh and English, while about half speak Welsh only.

All the place-names will therefore be Welsh. Almost the only exceptions are a few Norse names, given to points on the coast by the bands of raiding Northmen. Near Snowdonia the only non-Welsh names are Anglesey, Great Orme's Head, which perpetuates the name of some Norse sea-rover, and Priestholm, the name given

to the island formerly called Ynys Seiriol, and now renamed by the English Puffin Island. Nearly the only other English name which meets us is Snowdon itself, which is given both to the peak which the Welsh call Y Wyddfa, and to the mountain range which they call Eryri.

With regard to the Welsh place-names the English tourist has two great difficulties—to pronounce them and to understand them. This is not the place for a dissertation on Welsh pronunciation, but a few practical hints may be of use. The vowels *a*, *e*, *i*, *o* will give little difficulty ; but *u* is always pronounced like a short *i* ; *w* is a long *o*, or rather *oo* ; and *y* has two sounds, being equivalent to a short *i* in monosyllables and final syllables, but otherwise = *u*. The diphthong sounds are more difficult, and had better be learnt from the Welsh themselves. Of the consonants *c* is always hard = *k* ; and *g* is also hard ; *dd* is a soft *th* ; *f* = *v*, but *ff* = *f*. The two most difficult sounds are *ch*, which is a guttural, pronounced in the back of the throat, and *ll*, which is really an aspirated *l*, *i.e.* *hl*. This sound, however, is often beyond the ordinary Englishman, who is fain to compromise on *thl*. One other Welsh peculiarity should be noticed—that is, of modifying the initial consonant of a word according to the letter which has preceded it. It is necessary to observe that *e.g.* *Moel* and *Foel*, *Pont* and *Bont*, *Goch* and *Coch*, *Bach* and *Fach*, are in each case forms of the same word. The accent in Welsh always falls on the penultimate syllable.

Among the commonest words used in place-names are the following :

(1) *Mountains or parts of mountains*.—*Allt* (height), *Braich* (arm), *Bryn* (hill), *Bwlch* (pass), *Caer* (fort), *Carn*, *Carnedd* (summit crowned by heap of stones),

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Cefn (ridge), *Clogwyn* (precipice), *Craig* (crag), *Crib* (crest or ridge), *Cwm* (large hollow in mountain), *Dinas* (hill-fort), *Drosgl* (hump or shoulder, used of lower mountain which buttresses a higher), *Maen* (rock or stone), *Moel* (bare rounded mountain), *Mynydd* (mountain), *Pen* (summit or headland).

(2) *Connected with water*.—*Aber* (river-mouth), *Afon* (stream), *Ffynnon* (source or spring), *Gwy* and *Wy* (water), *Llyn* (lake or tarn), *Nant* (stream, then of the valley through which the stream flows), *Pont* (bridge), *Rhaiadr* (waterfall), *Rhyd* (ford).

(3) *General words in common use*.—*Mawr* (great), *Bach* (little), *Uchaf* (upper), *Isaf* (lower), *Gwyn*, *Wyn* (white), *Du* and *Ddu* (black), *Goch* (red), *Glas* (blue or green), *Llwyd* (brown), *Melyn* (yellow), *Llan* (church), *Bedd* (grave), *Plâs* (mansion), *Porth* (gate), *Drws* (door), *Dol* (meadow), *Tal* (front or height).

These short lists will form the key to numbers of place-names. To take some instances: *Penmaen-mawr* means “big, rocky headland”; *Llanfairfechan*, “little church of St Mary”; *Bwlch-y-Ddeufaen*, “Pass of the two stones”; *Ffynnon Llugwy*, “source of clear water”; *Aberglaslyn*, “mouth of the stream of the blue lake”; *Cwm Clogwyn*, “hollow of the precipice.” *Moelwyn* and *Moel Ddu* are simply “white mountain” and “black mountain,” *Y Foel Goch*, “the red mountain,” and so on indefinitely. The above section only aims at giving the minimum of information, which may prevent a tourist on his first visit from being hopelessly at sea in an unknown language.

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VII. HISTORY

When the Romans first invaded Wales, Snowdonia was part of the district of Gwynedd, inhabited by a mixture of Iberians and Goidels (see p. 17), and the former race were also very strong in the neighbouring Môn (Anglesey), which was the centre of the Druid worship. Suetonius Paullinus was the first Roman commander to invade Snowdonia and cross the Menai Straits. But hardly had he landed, and defeated the Druids (A.D. 61), when he was recalled by the rebellion of Boudicca. Next came Julius Agricola, who in A.D. 78 again crossed the Straits, by fording and swimming, and conquered the whole island of Môn. At what point these generals crossed the Straits is uncertain. From that time the Snowdon district came into the power of the Romans, and was held down by forts and roads in the usual method (see p. 31). After the Romans had finally left, and while the Saxons were beginning to conquer the Brythons in the E. and S. of Britain, a Brythonic chief from Cumbria, called Cunedda, is said to have invaded N. Wales, with his eight sons, and not only to have conquered Gwynedd, but to have established a Brythonic ascendancy throughout Wales. The Goidels of Snowdonia made a fierce resistance, and were not finally overthrown till they were defeated by Cadwallon of the Long Hand, grandson of Cunedda. The names and stories of these events are possibly unhistorical, but they refer to a real Brythonic conquest, after which all the Welsh, together with the Brythons of Cumbria, were called Cymry, and spoke the Welsh language. Cadwallon's son, *Maelgwn*, however, is certainly a historical character, the first of the Welsh princes

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whom we can feel to be flesh and blood. He was the first to claim an overlordship for Gwynedd over most of Wales. His home was at Deganwy, of the ancient castle in which place he is the traditional builder, and he died (about 550) at the neighbouring church of Eglwys Rhôs, whither he had retreated in terror of the yellow plague (p. 46). He is lashed by Gildas for his crimes, and in particular for having taken monastic vows and then broken them, but he was a generous giver to the monasteries, including that lately founded at Bangor. Indeed, tradition connects him with the foundation of the bishopric in that city.

The times of Maelgwn and his successors are sometimes called the "Age of the Saints." Wales had been Christianized before the end of the Roman occupation, and since then the monastic ideal had taken strong hold on the country, so that by now the Saints, *i.e.* the monks, were giving their names to the churches they were founding in all parts of Wales. Somewhat later, when St Augustine landed, he held a conference with the Welsh bishops, but could not induce them to submit to the Church.

The successors of Maelgwn had now to fight with the growing power of the Saxon kingdom Northumbria. The victory of Æthelfrith at Chester about 613 indicated that a wedge would soon be driven between the two branches of the Cymry, in Cumbria and Wales. The next Northumbrian king, Eadwine, invaded Gwynedd and captured Anglesey. But the tide was for the time arrested when *Cadwallon*, prince of Gwynedd, formed an alliance with Penda, king of Mercia, with the result that together they defeated and killed Eadwine. Next year, however, Cadwallon was himself defeated and killed by Oswald; and although his son Cadwaladr presently continued the

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fight, the attempt to break the Northumbrian power was quite hopeless after the death of Penda in 655. Wales, however, though separated from Cumbria, had preserved her independence. During the next 150 years the Saxon attack came from Mercia, and resulted only in the delimitation of practically the modern frontier of Wales, which was at last fixed by Offa's Dyke. During this time Wales was almost entirely isolated, and we know little of its history. The princes of Gwynedd grew weak, and lost for the time all their dominions except Anglesey. But in the 9th century, when the attacks of the Northmen grew dangerous, there arose a strong prince of Gwynedd, *Rodri the Great*, who united nearly all Wales under his sway, and by his wisdom and valour set an effective check to the raids of the pirates. On his death in 877 his kingdom was divided up among his sons, a bad custom, which was always causing trouble in mediæval Wales. His son Anarawd, who obtained Gwynedd, gained a victory near Conway in 881 over an invading Mercian army, led by Alfred the Great's son-in-law. Nevertheless, in company with the other Welsh princes, he made submission to Alfred the Great, whose known justice and efficiency as a protection from the Northmen made him trusted.

In 942 nearly all Wales was again united for a few years under the strong and beneficent rule of *Hywel Dda* (the Good), who was already prince of South Wales, and now became ruler of Gwynedd as well. After his death in 950 his kingdom split up again into dissension and civil war, first between Gwynedd and South Wales, between whom a battle was fought near Llanrwst in 954, then in Gwynedd itself. Long years of weakness and division followed, with the accompaniment of incessant raids by the sea pirates ;

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until in 1039 a strong national ruler of Gwynedd appeared, *Gruffydd ap Llewelyn*, who, after many vicissitudes, made himself master of nearly all Wales, and defied the power of Edward the Confessor. Finally, however, in 1063 he was defeated by Harold, the first successfully to penetrate the fastnesses of Snowdonia, and fell by the treachery of his friends. Three years later Harold's power fell before the Normans, and a new era in Welsh history commences.

In the period that follows it is important to notice that Gwynedd consists mainly of two parts, separated by the river Conway. Gwynedd "above Conway" contains Snowdonia and Anglesey, which remained in Welsh hands continuously till the conquest by Edward the First. Gwynedd "below Conway" corresponds fairly with the present counties of Flint and Denbigh, and was constantly being taken by the Norman or English invaders, and retaken from them. The first Norman attack was from Robert of Rhuddlan, the energetic lieutenant of Hugh Lupus, Earl of Chester. He pushed his conquests along the N. coast of Wales as far as the Conway, and rebuilt the castle of Deganwy as a Norman fortress. Here, in 1088, he was killed by a party of Welsh raiders from the sea. Earl Hugh, a formidable Norman baron, at once savage and capable, now took up the attack. He forced the line of the Conway, and nearly conquered the whole of Snowdonia, founding castles at Bangor and Carnarvon. His power is shown by the election of a Norman to the bishopric of Bangor in 1092. But in 1094 the energetic *Gruffydd ap Cynan*, after a long Odyssey of strange adventures, regained permanently the sovereignty of Gwynedd, and headed a national revolt, in which the castles were destroyed and with them the Norman power W. of the Conway. Next

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year William the Red led an expedition against him, which only reached Tomen y Mur (p. 31). In 1098 Earl Hugh led a final expedition to Anglesey, the doubtful result of which made him abandon any further attempts to conquer Gwynedd above Conway. In 1114, when Henry I. marched against Gruffydd, he submitted and paid a fine, but lost no territory. In the last twenty years of his reign his energetic sons reconquered for him Gwynedd below Conway. On his death in 1137 his eldest son, *Owain Gwynedd*, who succeeded him, was far the most powerful prince in Wales. During his long reign (1137 to 1170) Snowdonia enjoyed peace and prosperity, all the fighting being outside its borders. At first Owain was uniformly victorious, but on the accession of Henry II. in 1154 he had a more formidable enemy to meet. In 1157 Henry invaded N. Wales, and forced Owain to pay homage and surrender part of his dominions. But six years later, when the quarrel broke out afresh, Owain was at the head of a great Welsh confederation. Henry tried to invade Wales by crossing the Berwyn mountains, but was forced by the bad weather to retreat ignominiously. After this, Owain's reign ended in peace and prosperity. He was buried in Bangor Cathedral, together with his brother Cadwaladr, who had quarrelled with him persistently all through his reign.

After Owain's death his kingdom was divided among his many sons, and a period of weakness and internal strife followed, until power was seized by his grandson, *Llewelyn the Great*, whose father, Jorwerth, had ruled Nant Conway from Dolwyddelan Castle, where Llewelyn himself may have been born. In 1200 he became ruler over the whole of Gwynedd, both E. and W. of the Conway. For many years his relations

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with King John, whose daughter Joan he had married, remained friendly ; but in 1211 John was alarmed at his growing power, and led a strong expedition to Deganwy, but for the time failed to cross the Conway, and had to retreat. Later in the year he tried again with greater success, and advanced to Aber, from which he sent forward a party to burn Bangor Cathedral. Llewelyn had to submit, and sent Joan to negotiate a treaty with her father, who consented to a peace by which Llewelyn was restricted to his possessions W. of the Conway. But the imminent quarrel of John with his barons soon turned the situation. Next year Llewelyn recovered the provinces E. of the Conway, crowning his successes in 1213 by the recapture of Deganwy. In 1215 he headed a league of all the great chieftains in Wales, which almost swept the Normans out of S. Wales, and in 1218, when he did homage to the youthful Henry III. at Worcester, he was confirmed by treaty in all his conquests. From this time till his death in 1240 his position was secure as prince of a united Gwynedd and leader of the Welsh chieftains. He styled himself "Lord of Snowdon." He had palaces at Carnarvon and Aber, the latter connected with the romantic story of his wife Joan (p. 84) and her subsequent death. He was a great benefactor to the Church. In Snowdonia he built Trefriw Church, patronized Beddgelert Priory, and probably settled the Knights Hospitallers at Ysppyty Ifan. His donations to the Aberconwy Abbey were so extensive that he is popularly regarded as its founder. He was buried in the Abbey, but, by the vicissitudes of fortune, his empty coffin is now in the Gwydir chapel at Llanrwst.

He was succeeded by his son Dafydd, who was attacked by Henry III. in 1241, before he was firm

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on his throne, and forced to surrender most of his father's conquests. In 1244 Dafydd felt himself stronger, and renewed the conflict. In 1245 Henry III. brought a great army to Deganwy, and rebuilt the castle, but after many efforts he was unable to force the passage of the Conway. Next year Dafydd died, and a decade of great weakness set in. Gwynedd was again restricted to the W. of the Conway and ruled by Dafydd's three nephews. At last in 1255 *Llewelyn ap Gruffydd* conquered his brothers Owain Goch and Dafydd at the battle of Brynerwyn (on the extreme S.W. of the Snowdonian mountains), and became sole prince of Gwynedd. Owain Goch, the elder brother, was kept in prison for many long years, perhaps at Dolbadarn Castle. Llewelyn now began a victorious career, which has thrown a sunset glory round the last years of Welsh independence. Before the end of the next year he had completely recovered Gwynedd below Conway. The next year his progress was so rapid that Henry III. led an expedition against him, but had again to retire baffled from Deganwy. Next year (1258) Llewelyn took the new title of "Prince of Wales," and received the homage of all the other Welsh chieftains. For several years the internal troubles of England prevented any effective action against Wales. When Deganwy fell in 1263 not a foot of land in N. Wales remained to the English crown. Even his alliance with Simon de Montfort did not hurt Llewelyn, and by the treaty of Montgomery in 1267 his title and all his conquests were confirmed. Ten years of peace and power followed, but, when Edward I. succeeded to the throne, Llewelyn grew suspicious, and virtually refused to pay him homage. Relations grew worse and worse, until in 1277 Edward prepared for serious war. He first

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attacked Llewelyn's power in Central Wales and rapidly broke it up; then his army pushed straight against Snowdonia, while his fleet landed in Anglesey and burnt the crops. Thus, by treating the inaccessible mountain regions as an enormous fort to be blockaded and starved out, he reduced Llewelyn to submission. By the treaty of Conway Llewelyn was stripped of his conquests, and again confined to Gwynedd above Conway. He accepted the situation, did homage to Edward, and was allowed in 1278 to marry his bride, Simon de Montfort's daughter, Eleanor, whom Edward had captured two years before. His brother Dafydd had sided with the English, and was given most of Denbigh to rule. In 1282, Dafydd, stung by the oppressions of the English in N. Wales, broke into sudden revolt, and Llewelyn joined him, perhaps hoping to repeat his conquest of 1256. Edward repeated his tactics of 1277 by throwing a force into Anglesey, and moving gradually another force by the coast route to Conway to co-operate with it. But when the Anglesey troops attempted to cross the Straits to the mainland by a bridge of boats, a party of English knights were isolated and cut off by the Welsh. This was "near Bangor," possibly at Moel y Don. Archbishop Peckham's mediation at Aber, not in any case likely to have succeeded, was now rejected by Llewelyn, who immediately left Snowdonia to concert a diversion against Edward in Mid-Wales, but was slain in a petty skirmish near Builth, not without suspicion of treachery. On his death all resistance collapsed. Dafydd attempted to continue the fight, but Dolwyddelan Castle and Conway were seized early in 1283, and with Bangor and Carnarvon also held, Snowdonia became unsafe for Dafydd, who broke out and made a final resistance at Bere

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Castle in the Cader Idris district. When this fell, he doubled back to Snowdon, and after a long chase was captured near Aber. His pitiless execution has turned him into a national hero, an honour he scarcely deserves.

After conquering the country, Edward I. stayed about three years in it to consolidate it. Snowdonia, with the Llyn and Creuddyn peninsulas, now became the county of Carnarvonshire; while Carnarvon and Conway were reconstituted as English boroughs, and fortified by strong walls and newly-built castles. In 1284 Edward II. was born in Carnarvon Castle, but the title of "Prince of Wales" was only bestowed on him seventeen years later. The Black Prince was the next holder of the title, after which it was regularly given to the king's eldest son. In 1294 the new state of things was endangered by a sudden rising of the Welsh, in which the town and castle of Carnarvon were burnt. Edward at once hurried across the Conway with inadequate forces, but was driven back into Conway Castle, where he was for a time in considerable danger. Next month a defeat of the insurgents both relieved Conway and suppressed the rising. A quiet century followed, and the warlike energies of the Welsh were partly transferred in Edward III.'s reign to the battlefields of France. We hear in particular of two Poitiers heroes, Hywel Coetmore, buried at Llanrwst, and Sir Hywel "of the Axe." In 1399 Conway was the scene of an episode in the lamentable fall of Richard II. The 15th century opened with the stormy period of *Owain Glyndwr's* revolt, in which all the principal towns of Carnarvonshire suffered. In 1401 Conway Castle was seized on Good Friday, but was soon recaptured. In 1402 Owain burned Bangor Cathedral, and in 1403 unsuccessfully attacked

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Carnarvon. The celebrated "partition treaty" between Owain Glyndwr and the Percies was not at Bangor, as Shakespeare says, but, if anywhere, at Aberdaron (p. 100). Dolbadarn Castle was held by Owain, and was used as a prison for his enemy, Lord Grey of Ruthin. Later in the century (1468), during the Wars of the Roses, the district of Nant Conway suffered severely in a march of the Earl of Pembroke and his brother against Harlech Castle.

When the Tudor family became kings of England, Wales was naturally more disposed to be loyal, and there followed soon the Act of Union under Henry VIII. and the gift of Parliamentary representation. In 1541 accordingly there appeared at Westminster Sir Richard Bulkeley and John Puleston, representing respectively the county and boroughs of Carnarvon. There resulted increased security of life and property, which may be illustrated by comparing the peaceful life of Sir John Wynne at Gwydir at the end of the 16th century with the stormy times of his ancestor Meredydd at Dolwyddelan at the beginning of the century. But another time of fighting came on with the Great Civil War. At first Bangor, Conway and Carnarvon were all held for the Royalists; but Bangor, being unfortified, was soon evacuated; whereas Conway and Carnarvon held out till 1646, when they were both captured by the Parliamentary troops under Colonel Mytton. (For the connection of Archbishop Williams and Sir John Owen with the siege of Conway, see p. 53.) In the second Civil War of 1648 Sir John Owen rose again for the king, defeated Colonel Mytton, and besieged Carnarvon, but was finally himself defeated and captured near Llandegai.

At this point the "drum and trumpet" history ends, and the remaining story, important as it is, is hardly

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a matter for the present work. In the 18th century the life of Snowdonia was but sluggish. The Church abuses of the time pressed with special weight on Wales, where the incumbent was usually an Englishman who could not speak the language of his congregation. The nemesis was a great increase of Nonconformity in the 19th century. Other influences of the last century which have transformed the district are the increased facilities for communication, the development of industrial resources, chiefly in the direction of mining and quarrying, and above all the national revival, accompanied by great interest in education and in the Welsh language and literature. On the growth of tourists and sight-seers a few salient points may just be alluded to, such as Dr Johnson's visit in 1774, when the mountain peaks still retained much of their terrors, Thomas Pennant's "Tours in Wales," David Cox's discovery of the beauties of the Bettws-y-Coed valley, George Borrow's long walk in 1854, recorded in "Wild Wales," and the visits of Charles Kingsley and his friends to Beddgelert and Pen y Gwryd. Here it is best to stop. To exemplify the difference between the old Wales, and the new Wales of the chapel, the quarry and the tourist, it is enough to compare Conway with Llandudno, or Carnarvon with Llanberis or Bethesda.

VIII. ANTIQUITIES

1. *Prehistoric*.—Of ancient cromlechs, now considered to be Neolithic sepulchres, Carnarvonshire contains a dozen, but most are in the Llyn peninsula, outside the district treated. Four only are referred to in this work, the most interesting one at Capel Garmon,

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another on the Great Orme's Head, and ruined ones at Porthllwyd, and near the Bwlch-y-Ddeufaen. There are two stone circles called Meini Hirion on the moors above Penmaenmawr. It is uncertain whether these belong to the late Neolithic or the Bronze Age. The positions of several monoliths or standing stones are indicated by the ordnance map, such as the two at the summit of the Bwlch-y-Ddeufaen Pass. In Penmaenmawr itself has been discovered a burying-place of the Bronze Age. The ancient cairns on the mountains, such as those on Y Drosgl, Drum, and near the summit of Carnedd Dafydd, also belong to the Bronze Age, and were doubtless burying-places. Pre-historic forts, which were probably camps of refuge, are fairly common, *i.e.* Pen-y-Ddinas on the Great Orme, Caer Lleion on Conway Mountain, Braich-y-Dinas on Penmaenmawr, Pen y Gaer, Dinas Emrys, and slight ruins on Dinas above Llanfairfechan and on Craig Cwm Bychan. All were surrounded by stone walls.

2. *Roman*.—There were three Roman stations in the district, in all of which Roman remains have been discovered, *i.e.* (1) Conovium at Caerhun in the Conway valley; (2) Segontium at Carnarvon; (3) one of unknown name at Tomen-y-Mur, above Maentwrog. We know from the Itinerary of Antoninus that a Roman road from Deva (Chester) ran to Conovium and Segontium. The latter part of this was over the Bwlch-y-Ddeufaen Pass to Aber, whence it ran to Carnarvon. The discovery of four Roman milestones on this route leaves no doubt as to the identification. From Conovium to Tomen-y-Mur runs the Roman road now called Sarn Helen. There are two bridges in this neighbourhood, often called Roman, one on the Lledr, the other on the

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Machno, but they are off the line of the Roman road, and their claims are unfounded. Of the road connecting Segontium with Tomen-y-Mur no trace seems to exist.

3. *Churches*.—As a rule these are small, rude and plain, with scarcely any architectural features. The visitor is often taken to see tiny churches, sometimes in strangely lonely positions, such as St Tudno's Church, Llangelynin, Llantysilio, and Llanrwchwyn, and is quite ready to believe that the primitive-looking buildings before him are early British churches. It is true that many of them were founded in the 5th and 6th centuries, often in honour of some local "saint," *i.e.* monk or hermit. But the original buildings were of wood, or even wattle, and have long disappeared. No church in Wales has any stonework dating before the Norman period; in fact, Welsh churches in Gwynedd seem first to have been built of stone in the later years of Gruffydd ap Cynan (*c.* 1120 to 1137). In a few cases the masonry of a church may be of this date, but more usually it will be of the 15th or 16th century. Signs of style are rare. The only church which shows any records reaching back to pre-Norman times is Penmachno, which, though itself rebuilt, contains three interesting Christian monuments of the 5th or 6th century. There are only four churches in Snowdonia which are of interest for their architecture. Bangor Cathedral shows little work dating before the restoration of 1496; Conway Church has some Early English and Geometrical work. Beddgelert also has a little Early English work, probably taken from the monastery; and St Mary's, Carnarvon, was built about 1300, contemporaneously with the castle and walls. Beside those already mentioned, the following churches are worth seeing, either for

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interesting monuments, history or legends connected with them, or from mere charm of situation—Llanrwst with the Gwydir chapel, Bettws-y-Coed, Dolwyddelan, Llandegai, Llanrhos, Trefriw, Llanbeblig, Caer-hun, Old Llanberis, Maentwrog.

4. *Abbeys and Ecclesiastical Houses.*—These have entirely disappeared. Those of Aberconwy and Beddgelert have, as we have just seen, left a few traces behind in their respective parish churches. Maenan Abbey, to which Edward I. transferred the Aberconwy monks, is now only a site without buildings, and its sole relics are the screen, and the coffin of its benefactor Llewelyn the Great, which have been transferred to Llanrwst Church. Gogarth Abbey, on the Great Orme's Head, consists of a few ruined walls; and the foundation of the Knights Hospitallers on the upper Conway only lingers in the name Yspytty ("Hospital") Ifan.

5. *Castles.*—Of the five historical castles of Snowdonia, the famous Deganwy only shows a few fragments of masonry and a detached watch-tower. Dolwyddelan has a solitary round tower, strikingly situated on a conical hill. Of Dolbadarn also only the round keep is standing, but the situation is highly picturesque. On the other hand, the great castles of Edward I. at Conway and Carnarvon are still the glory of their respective towns. The walls of these towns are of the same date and architecture.

6. *Domestic Architecture.*—The finest private house in Snowdonia is the Elizabethan Plâs Mawr in Conway. In the Creuddyn peninsula there are four old family residences—Gloddaeth, Penrhyn, Bodysgallen, and Marl—three of which have buildings dating back to Tudor times. Vaynol Hall also, on the Menai Straits, is an old Tudor mansion. Gwydir Castle, the home of

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the Wynne family, is rather remarkable for the treasures contained in it than for its architecture. Penrhyn Castle, though the estate is old, is a modern building.

IX. LIST OF MOUNTAINS

[This list contains all the important mountains in Snowdonia over 2000 ft., and a few of the most remarkable ones which are under that limit.]

I.

To the N. of the Nant Ffrancon.

Carnedd Llewelyn .	3484	Drum .	2528
„ Dafydd .	3426	Y Drosogl ¹ (2) .	2483
Y Foel Grach .	3195	„ (1) .	2182
Braich Ddu .	3164	Pen-y-Castell .	2034
Yr Elen .	3151	Tal-y-Fan .	2000
Y Foel Fras .	3091	Creigiau Gleision .	2000
Yr Arryg .	2875	Moel Wnion .	1902
Bera Mawr .	2750	Penmaen Mawr .	1553
Llwydmor .	2743	Y Foel Llys .	1180
Pen Helyg .	2731	Conway Mountain	808
Pen Llithrig .	2621	Great Orme's Head	679

II.

Between the Nant Ffrancon and the Llanberis Pass.

Glyder Fawr .	3279	Moel Perfydd .	2750
„ Fach .	3262	Y Foel Goch .	2726
Y Garn .	3104	Carnedd y Filiast .	2694
Elidyr Fawr .	3029	Elidyr Fach .	2564
Tryfaen .	3010		

¹ The two mountains of this name buttress Y Foel Fras (1) to the N., (2) to the S.

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III.

S. of the Llanberis Pass.

<i>Snowdon</i> , i.e.		Moel Eilio ¹	. . . 2382
Y Wyddfa . . .	3570	Moelwyn Bach . . .	2334
Carnedd Ugan (or		Mynydd Mawr . . .	2290
Crib y Ddysgl) . .	3493	Yr Allt Fawr . . .	2287
Crib Goch . . .	3023	Cynicht . . .	2268
Lliwedd . . .	2947	Manod Mawr . . .	2166
Yr Aran . . .	2451	Moel Llefn . . .	2094
Moel Siabod . . .	2860	Moel Penamnen . .	2000
Moel Hebog . . .	2566	Moel Meirch . . .	1998
Moelwyn . . .	2527	Y Ro Wen . . .	1961
Y Garnedd Goch . .	2408	Moel Ddu . . .	1811

¹ There is a less important mountain of the same name, referred to as Moel Eilio (2), somewhat W. of the Conway valley.

CHAPTER I

THE CREUDDYN PENINSULA AND LLANDUDNO

I. 1. THE description of Snowdonia will naturally begin with that part of it which lies nearest to the principal approach, the Chester and Holyhead Railway.

Along the east bank of the Conway, the boundary of Snowdonia proper, there stretches a continuous belt of hilly, though scarcely mountainous, country, which perhaps may be conveniently referred to as the Hiraethog plateau. The railway has avoided this by choosing the line of least resistance, *i.e.* the narrow strip of level land between the hill country and the sea, following the example of generations of conquerors or would-be conquerors of Wales, including the Roman generals Suetonius Paulinus and Agricola, and a long line of early English kings and commanders. For, indeed, it was hardly a case then of more or less resistance ; it was a choice of that way or not at all. Hence the few miles, which lie between Abergele and the W. end of Colwyn Bay, have probably seen more fighting, and have been more connected with history, than any other part of the British Isles. This route is therefore of double interest to us, not only as our present approach to the Carnarvonshire mountains, but also historically, as the road by which the armies assailing Welsh liberty invariably marched. Thus a short description of this pleasant railway journey forms the natural introduction to the subject.

2. Chester, our starting-point, is an ideal place for changing trains, especially if the trains don't fit, and

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allow an hour or two to explore cathedral, rows and walls. On leaving it we first traverse the flat Cheshire plain, but soon obtain on the L. a distant view of the Clwydian range of hills in Denbighshire. At about 5 m. from Chester the flagstaff of Hawarden Castle appears above a wooded knoll L., with Moel Fammau, the chief mountain of the Clwydian range, directly behind it. Soon after this the Dee, which has accompanied us the whole way from Chester, expands into a noble estuary R., with the Wirrall peninsula opposite. If the tide is up, there is a broad stretch of water; if not, we must be content with thinking of the Sands of Dee, where "the creeping tide came up among the sands." For a while this is the only charm of the view, for we are now in a manufacturing district, and soon cross the Welsh border into Flintshire. Flint itself is a chaos of manufacturing buildings, among which stand up forlorn the ruins of the historical castle, sacred to memories of Richard II., Bolingbroke, and, above all, Shakespeare. Seven m. further Mostyn Hall is L. of the line (but not seen). It is slightly connected with the deposition of another Richard, for it is said that here Richard III.'s army nearly captured Richmond, and that he had to escape by a hurried flight through the "King's Window." There are now wooded hills on our L., and the scenery still further improves as we approach Aire Point (R.), flanked by sandhills, beyond which the Dee finally reaches open sea. Round the corner we have the Irish Sea (R.), and the line of Denbighshire watering-places begins; first Prestatyn, then Rhyl, itself on flat ground, but lying at the mouth of the broad and beautiful Clwyd valley, the flanking hills of which can be seen stretching away into the dim distance on both sides. Moel Fammau is very conspicuous E., the chief point

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of the range which bounds on the E. nearly every distant view from Snowdonia. The towers of Rhuddlan Castle and S. Asaph Cathedral can be distinguished. Directly after leaving Rhyl there is a beautiful view L., where we cross the estuary of the Clwyd. Soon afterwards, about Abergele, we leave the valley for the narrow strip of land between sea and mountains, which was found so dangerous by invading armies. The most perilous point was at Penmaen Rhos, the E. horn of Colwyn Bay, where the mountains touch the sea for one moment, and form a precipitous headland. About here the most careless of generals would be apprehensive of a sudden attack or an ambushade. We are now in very pretty country. Close on the R. is the sweep of Colwyn Bay, extending to the Little Orme's Head. On the L. is a range of pleasantly wooded limestone hills. It is perhaps a pity that so many Manchester and Liverpool merchants have built their villas here, but these are mostly well built and have tastefully laid-out grounds. The watering-place of Colwyn Bay is a bright and pleasant introduction to the glories of Snowdonia, which are now close at hand. For we now turn away from the sea, cross the neck of the Creuddyn peninsula, and soon are gazing on the wide estuary of the Conway, backed by a thick crowd of grand mountain forms. At Llandudno Junction we turn R., and, keeping the estuary L., pass by Deganwy to Llandudno.

3. The name Creuddyn means Bloody Fort, and is stated to have belonged originally to the ancient fort on Pen-y-Ddinas, directly overhanging Llandudno. Such a name would better suit the history of Deganwy Castle, but more of this a little later. The name is now applied to the whole peninsula lying between Colwyn Bay and the Conway estuary. The neck is

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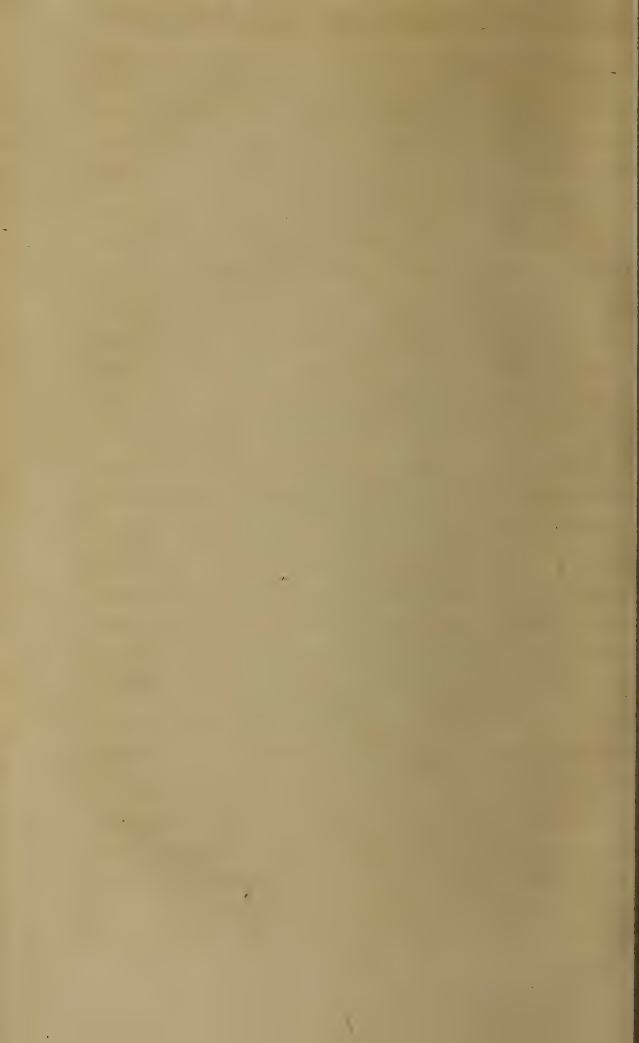
3 m. across, stretching on flat ground from about N.E. to S.W., and very largely coinciding with the county boundary and the line of the railway. From this base the peninsula extends 6 m. in a north-westerly direction. For the first 3 m. the breadth is maintained, and the outline fairly regular, except for three promontories: (1) at the mouth of the Conway, (2) near Rhos-on-Sea, (3) Little Orme's Head. Then the breadth narrows remarkably till it is only a mile broad on the sandy flat where Llandudno has been built. Finally it broadens a little, and attains its maximum height in the grand peninsula of the Great Orme's Head.

Geologically most of the peninsula is the end of a remarkable belt of mountain limestone, which runs for miles parallel to the north coast. It is mainly taken up by three groups of limestone hills. First in the S.E. there is a short range, of which Pabo Hill is the most conspicuous height. Then further N., and separated from the former by a green valley, is a second short range, which ends seaward in the Little Orme's Head. Then comes the sandy depression of Llandudno, and the peninsula ends in the Great Orme's Head. A small part of the peninsula, however, which lies W. round Deganwy, is volcanic in origin, and characterized by little hills formed of hard round bosses of dark rock, in strong contrast to the white limestone. Historically the interest of the peninsula is great, but it all centres in Deganwy Castle (p. 48).

4. *Llandudno* before 1849 was a small straggling village inhabited by fishermen and taking its name from the church of St Tudno upon the Great Orme. In that year the owner, E. M. L. Mostyn, started the plan of turning it into a watering-place of the modern type. Since then its growth has been rapid, and has



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by no means yet stopped. It may be that this type of watering-place hardly suits the associations of Snowdonia ; yet the situation has certainly been well chosen and the building wisely carried out. The town has been built facing the beautiful curve of Orme Bay, with the fine headlands of Great Orme to the W. and Little Orme to the E. Between these headlands lies a narrow sandy neck which faces the sea in both directions, the open Irish Sea to the N. and the estuary of the Conway to the S., with a glorious vision beyond of Welsh mountains. The original builders may have hesitated as to which of the two seas they should choose as a front. Though they decided to turn their backs on the view and face the open sea, their choice was certainly wise. For in Orme Bay the tide does not go out very far at low water, whereas Conway Bay at the same time is a dreary waste of uncovered sand and shingle. The extension of the town is now resulting in the building of houses on the Conway shore as well, so that the watering-place may already claim to have a double sea-front. The town has been well planned, with broad regular streets mostly intersecting at right angles, well-built houses, and very spacious esplanade and pier, so that, even when the throng of tourists is greatest, there seems plenty of elbow-room. It may be added that the health-giving qualities of the town have been well looked after, both by nature and by the local authorities. That the place is a thorough success is obvious : first from its perpetual expansion, for which fortunately there is plenty of room without doing harm to the scenery (though one could wish that fewer houses had been built on the slopes of the Great Orme); secondly from the incessant tide of visitors, which very often quadruples the native population ; and thirdly from the prices for which the

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proprietors of hotels and boarding-houses are able to ask. It may be added that views of the Snowdonian range are by no means excluded. Beautiful vistas are seen at the ends of the cross streets, and from the pier-head a really first-rate retrospective view can be had.

There are one or two defects incidental to so exceptional a position. The unsightliness of the Conway estuary at low water has already been referred to. The predominance of bare limestone results in an absence of trees, and consequently of shade, in hot summer weather. This, however, is tempered by the sea-breezes which blow from both sides. Lastly, the advantages of a quasi-insular position are largely discounted for the young and active by the inevitable narrowing of the rambling-ground, which in this case hardly extends beyond the Creuddyn peninsula. This disadvantage, however, has been largely obviated by the numerous and well-arranged excursions in motor char-à-bancs to all parts of Snowdonia, which are such a feature of the place that Llandudno is often strangely described as a great tourist *centre*. In addition, frequent trains are run to places such as Bettws-y-Coed and the foot of Snowdon, and there is an excellent service of steamers down the Menai Straits to Bangor and Carnarvon. It must be allowed that there are aspects of this manifold activity which are not always pleasant to visitors in other parts of Snowdonia. Also it is to be lamented that tourists should grow accustomed more and more to whirl in motors through valleys and among mountains, instead of learning really to know and love them by rambling on foot.

II. 1. GREAT ORME'S HEAD (679).—This is the great scenic asset of Llandudno, just as Beachy Head is of Eastbourne. It is one of the finest headlands

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in England and Wales, if not *the* finest, a solid block of bare limestone cliff, over a mile broad and nearly seven hundred feet high, which stretches for two miles right out into the sea. The sides are mostly precipitous, but the top fairly flat, and it rises straight up from Llandudno to its full height with hardly an intervening stage. The grand way in which the promontory stands out into the sea is a prominent feature in all the coast-views of it, from Conway right to Bangor.

The direct ascent from Llandudno is from the N.W. end of Mostyn Street, where it is crossed by Church Walk. Continue N. by Ty-Gwyn road, following it when it bends L. After this the way is obvious. There is also a *cable tramway* to the top. From the top of Mostyn St. turn W. down Church Walk and the tram station will soon be seen R. of the road. On the summit (679) is the *Old Telegraph Station*, now licensed as an inn. Near it is a circular index showing all the mountains in sight. The *view* is, of course, first-rate. We are looking right up the glorious Menai Straits, at least as far as Bangor, and in clear weather up to the narrow part beyond. On the R. is Anglesey, with the little *Puffin Island* (or Priestholme) in front, a limestone rock looking like a quaint miniature of the Great Orme itself. L. of the Straits is a glorious array of mountains. The two highest mountains in the centre are Y Foel Fras and Llwydmor, with a small piece of a still higher mountain, Carnedd Llewelyn, looking over the L. shoulder of the former. Nearer on the R. note the majestic sweep of Penmaen Mawr to the sea. If any visitor is disappointed at not seeing Snowdon, he should remember that Snowdon is only 480 ft. higher than Y Foel Fras, and 14 m. S. of it, so that it is effectually hid. The

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flat top of the Great Orme has a general level of 500 ft., on which the visitor can expatiate according to time and taste. He will probably first descend a little N. to see St Tudno's Church, from which Llandudno has taken its name. St Tudno was a British saint of the 7th cent., said to have had a cell on the spot where five centuries later the plain little Norman church was erected. Of this there remains the N.W. porch and fragments of the adjoining wall, with one small round-headed window. The W. end, with belfry and door, is also old, but probably Perp. All the rest is modern. Note two E.E. incised grave-stones on the S. wall, and an old circular font (not Gothic).

Walk or Drive round the Great Orme.—An excellent road nearly 5 m. long has been cut all round the headland. It is best to start by the N. side, close to the pier. Just above us is the height of *Pen-y-Ddinas* (p. 39), on which are the slight remains of a pre-historic fort, and a stone called St Tudno's Cradle. The cradle does not rock, and perhaps never did. A little farther is the entrance to the *Happy Valley*, a really beautiful hollow laid out as public gardens, and devoted to a sort of perpetual fair. Then we pass the toll-gate, where a small fee is charged for carriages and cycles. From the first promontory, Pen Trwyn, there is a fine retrospective view of town and bay. Then for $1\frac{1}{2}$ m. we have only sea views, with a precipitous drop below us and mostly overhanging crags above. Note a path L. by which St Tudno's chapel may be visited. At last there is a steep pull up to the far end of the headland, where the lighthouse is now below us. Below the lighthouse is a remarkable cave, the *Llech*, or Hiding Cave. A little farther is the *Hornby Cave*, so called from its connection with

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a wreck in 1824. From the road there now bursts on us a glorious view, in the main the same as that from the highest point, but with the addition of Conway. Carnedd Llewelyn is now seen between Y Foel Fras and Llwydmor. The road soon descends by a long hill quite to sea level, and, before regaining Llandudno, passes the scanty ruins of *Gogarth Abbey*, consisting of some fragments of walls and a chimney. Little or nothing is known of this foundation. We now pass another toll-gate, and soon regain Llandudno.

2. **LITTLE ORME'S HEAD** (463 ft.).—Though much smaller and 200 ft. lower than the Great Orme's Head, this headland is very picturesque, and has more abrupt cliffs than its more celebrated namesake. To reach it (1) take the coast road until it climbs between the Little Orme and the next hill (*Mynydd Pentre*), and continue up the little pass until near the top the walls stop L. and a very plain path strikes off for the headland, or (2) take the tram, which goes more S. When this runs into the former road at a point where four roads meet, turn L. and walk back along the former road for a few hundred yards, when the path will be clear. As the return is bound to be the same way, it is better first to walk the round of the cliffs and then climb to the cairn when returning. When walking N. there is a very pretty view over Colwyn Bay, with the Vale of Clwyd and the range of Moel Fammau beyond. Then we go round the grassy platform at the head of the precipices which descend nearly 300 ft. into the sea. A little care is required, since the grass often slopes steeply at the top of the cliffs. As we round the headland, Llandudno and its bay come beautifully into view. Then we return, and climbing the cairn, add the mountain view to complete the panorama. The mountains are nearly the same as those seen from

the Great Orme, only then we were looking more at their W. slopes, and now we have got more round to their E. side. Carnedd Llewelyn is now more prominent, and Pen Llithrig, with Moel Siabod beyond, has appeared to the L. of it. From the cairn we can strike down L. into the path by which we came.

3. *The Eastern Part of the Creuddyn Peninsula.*—The chief interest of this district is due to the two ranges of little limestone hills, 300 to 400 ft. high, which from the principal heights in each may be called the Gloddaeth and the Pabo ranges. Between them lies a pleasant green valley. Their slopes are often beautifully wooded, and from their tops fine views are obtained, which may be at once briefly summarized. There is a sea view both E. and W. reaching possibly as far as the Dee estuary E., but westward consisting only of Puffin Island and the coast of Anglesey. S. is Conway with the castle and estuary, and in some cases a view up the lower Conway valley. Conway mountain rises directly over the estuary, and of the mountain group beyond, the three principal heights are Tal-y-Fan, Y Foel Fras and Carnedd Llewelyn. The interest is increased by four old houses. Two lie S.E. of Gloddaeth range, namely Gloddaeth House, partly Elizabethan, with the date 1584, the ancestral seat of the Mostyns, owners of Llandudno, and Penrhyn, a small Tudor mansion where now tea can be had. The house is the scene of two remarkable and gruesome stories. The other two lie under the W. slopes of Pabo, *i.e.* Bodysgallen, also belonging to the Mostyns, and Marl Hall, a Queen Anne mansion, near which are the ruins of an older Tudor House.

Llanrhos Church ($1\frac{1}{2}$ m. from Llandudno) is only remarkable for the legend of the death of Prince Maelgwn (p. 20), who lived in the 6th cent. and has

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given a name to the neighbouring hill. It had been prophesied by Taliesin that a yellow monster would come up from the Morfa Rhianedd (the marsh near Llandudno) to devour him. The king in terror shut himself up in this church, but, looking through the keyhole, he saw the monster coming and promptly expired. This means that the prince died of the yellow plague, which devastated Europe in the 6th cent. In another account the plague is allegorically described as "a column of vapour, sweeping along the ground as a shower of rain."

4. DEGANWY is 2 m. S. of Llandudno, and half-way between it and Conway. The easiest way to reach it is due S. by a footpath along the shore of Conway Bay, crossing what is called the Warren. The main road is very circuitous. Take the Conway road as far as Llanrhos, then turn sharp R. into a road which first runs due W. and then turns down S. to Deganwy. The road passes among the curious volcanic knobs which are so characteristic of this corner of the peninsula. On one to the R. stands an ancient ruined tower, 20 ft. high, usually called the *Watch Tower*, but of which the origin and use are very uncertain. Was it an outpost of Deganwy Castle?

Deganwy is considered a rising watering-place. It deserves notice for two things: its magnificent view and the history of its ruined castle. It stands at the very mouth of the Conway, which here contracts its wide sandy estuary to quite a narrow channel. On the far side is the Morfa, or Conway Marsh, above which rise the Conway mountain and the headland of Penmaen Bach. Between this point and the Great Orme appear Anglesey, Puffin Island and a stretch of open sea. More to the S. Conway and its castle appear in all their glory, only about a mile distant, framed in

two wooded headlands. Above the town gradually rise the great mountains, till they reach their summit in the distant Carnedd Llewelyn. It has been well said that Deganwy exists not for what it is, but for what can be seen from it.

The *Castle* is on the highest (353) of the bossy volcanic hills just E. of the town. Walk up the road, and turn R. into York road, whence a pathway soon diverges L. making straight for the hill. Do not climb it, but skirt round its S. side, and the hill will be found really to consist of twin hills with a lower connecting platform facing S., on which are the castle ruins. The W. hill may be climbed, on the top of which are some more ruins, supposed to be the keep. The ruins are nothing but disjointed fragments of masonry, and but for their situation and history would be insignificant. The castle was built by the Welsh in early times to defend the passage of the Conway. After an invading enemy had achieved the dangerous march between the Denbigh mountains and the sea, he would find the Conway straight in front, and would naturally try to cross it at the narrowest point, in this case the actual mouth. The building was traditionally associated with Maelgwn (p. 20), the most powerful of the princes of the line of Cunedda, who, in the 5th and 6th cents., made Deganwy the capital over all Wales. Until the 9th cent. the castle remained a royal Welsh stronghold, when (in 822) it was destroyed by a Mercian invasion. When the Normans came, the site was seized, during the exile of the warlike prince Gruffydd ap Cynan, by Robert of Rhuddlan and Hugh Lupus, who rebuilt the castle. Robert was presently slain in a raid which the Welsh made from the sea in 1088, but the castle still remained in Norman hands, and for the next two centuries was used in the main

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for the attack on Snowdon, not for the defence. No permanent success, however, was achieved by the invaders, for the natural defences, the broad river, with the solid mountain barrier close behind, proved too strong. In the spring of 1211 John made the castle his headquarters when fighting against his son-in-law Llewelyn the Great.¹ But Llewelyn had driven all the cattle into Snowdonia, and the English army found no food, so that, after eating their horses, they had to retire rapidly, the king "in a great rage," as the Chronicler tells us. About harvest time he tried again with more success, forced the Conway passage, and sent his advanced guard as far as Bangor. Llewelyn sued for peace through his wife Joan, John's daughter, and John returned in triumph with hostages. But the next year Llewelyn was again in revolt. Deganwy Castle was retaken in 1213 and remained in Llewelyn's power till his death. In 1245 it was again in English hands, and rebuilt by Henry III., while warring against Dafydd, Llewelyn's son. A party of English crossed the Conway and sacked Aberconwy Abbey, but were driven back again by a rally of Welshmen. Famine attacked Henry's army, and he had to retreat without effecting anything. There is a lively account of the state of things in Henry's camp, from the letter of an English knight, preserved by Matthew of Paris. The castle was afterwards given by Henry to his son Prince Edward. It was besieged by Llewelyn ap Gruffydd in 1257, but relieved by Henry, who, however, could not follow up his success. In 1263 Llewelyn again took and destroyed it, and the site only passed finally into Edward's possession in 1277, when the Conquest of Wales was imminent.

¹ It seems that at the beginning of his reign Llewelyn had occupied Deganwy, but he lost it again in 1210.

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CHAPTER II

CONWAY AND THE LOWER CONWAY VALLEY

[*Approaches* from Chester and Llandudno—*v.* Ch. I.]

I. 1. THE beautiful and interesting borough of Conway may be called the key of Snowdonia. It is situated on the W. bank of the Conway estuary, and at the very foot of the lowest slope of the great mountain-mass, which, starting near the Irish Sea, rises higher and higher to the S. till it culminates in the giants which surround the passes of Nant Francon and Llanberis. From the earliest times the position was of great military importance. In 881 Anarawd, son of Rhodri, defeated here in a great battle the Mercians, who were led by Æthelred, Alfred the Great's son-in-law. About 1186 Aberconwy Abbey was founded, to which Llewelyn the Great became a special benefactor, granting also a charter to the small Welsh town which sprang up round it. Frequent attempts were made by English invaders to seize the town. In 1211 John built a fort here, which was destroyed the next year. Henry III.'s soldiers in 1245 only succeeded in plundering the abbey. Edward I. was more successful, since in 1277 the war ended in the treaty of Conway, which stripped Llewelyn ap Gruffydd of all his possessions but Snowdonia and Anglesey. In 1283, after the final defeat and death of Llewelyn, Edward chose Conway as one of his new English boroughs, by which to retain his hold on the conquered land, and in the next year the great castle and the walls were commenced. No Welshman was henceforth permitted to dwell here, so that the Aber-

A detailed historical map of Porth, showing streets, buildings, and the River Conway. Key locations include Porth y Castell, Porth y Felin, Porth y Uchaf, and Porth y Adol. The map also shows the River Conway, the Suspension Bridge, and the Porth y Castell Castle. The map is oriented with North at the top.

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conwy monks had to migrate to Maenan, about 8 miles up the Conway valley, carrying with them the tomb of their benefactor Llewelyn the Great, which may still be seen in Llanrwst church (p. 113). Apart from the ejection, the monks were not unkindly treated, and retained nearly all their privileges. Ten years after the Conquest the Welsh rebelled, and Edward, about Christmas 1294, hurried to Conway with his vanguard only. Early in 1295 he advanced to Bangor, but was driven back to Conway with the loss of nearly all his supplies. A regular siege of the castle followed, and, since an unusually high tide prevented the rest of his army from crossing the Conway, Edward was reduced to great straits. But before the end of January the Welsh were defeated, and the welcome relief arrived. A century later Conway was the scene of an episode in the fall of Richard II., who in 1399, after his return from Ireland, found himself here, deserted by all but a few friends. Northumberland was sent by Bolingbroke to lure Richard into his power at Flint Castle. In this he succeeded, after he and Richard had taken the Sacrament together in Conway church, as a pledge that neither intended harm to the other. A little later, in 1401, at the beginning of Owain Glyndwr's rebellion, the castle was captured by a sudden assault of his nephews on Good Friday, when the garrison were at church. It was quickly recaptured, but after this the jealous watch kept on the Welsh by the English settlers was intensified. Fair days were long considered dangerous times, when the presence of numerous Welsh farmers and shepherds might suggest to a daring leader the repetition of the former *coup-de-main*. But, as centuries passed, the old racial animosities died down, and the castle fell into disrepair. At the time of the great

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Civil War it was refortified and held for the King by John Williams, Archbishop of York. Apparently, however, Prince Rupert did not trust much to the church militant, for in December 1644 he appointed Sir John Owen governor, who in May 1645 turned the protesting bishop out with some violence. The injured prelate withdrew to Gloddaeth (p. 46), where, as he could get no redress from Charles I., his political feelings changed, so that in 1646 he actually took part in the final assault of the Parliamentary troops under Col. Mytton, first on the town, in the storming of which he was wounded, and then on the castle, which fell three months later (November 1646). It is fair to add that his chief aim was to act as mediator and so preserve the property of his friends and neighbours, for which he had formerly assumed responsibility. After the restoration Charles II. gave the castle to the Earl of Conway, who showed himself unworthy of his name by dismantling it and carrying off all the iron, timber and lead to be sold in Ireland (1665). The indignant townsmen had at any rate the satisfaction of hearing that all the ships had been wrecked on the voyage.

2. If the visitor sees Conway for the first time at high tide in the sunshine, he may well think that hardly any place could be more lovely. The town stands on the very bank of the bright, sparkling estuary, which here is quite half a mile broad. Two miles down it narrows very considerably at its mouth and then expands again into Conway Bay. On the near side, below the town, are the pretty woods and promontory of Bodlondeb; farther off, on the far-side, is Deganwy with its characteristic bossy rocks, beyond which is the smoother limestone of the Great and Little Orme's Head. N.W. the Conway mountain, very much fore-

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shortened, seems to overhang the city, and W., at the distance of about three miles, the main ridge of the mountain begins, the first conspicuous height being the long irregular top of Tal-y-Fan. On the S. the steep wooded promontory of Benarth takes away most of the view of the flatter country, which fringes the W. side of the Conway for 3 or 4 miles. The place itself is well worthy of these surroundings, a pure mediæval town, with castle, towers and walls untouched, save for the mellowing effects of time, since they were first erected for King Edward I.

Up till the 19th century the town was approached from the E. by a ferry over the Conway. To-day the passenger by road first crosses a causeway, then a graceful *suspension bridge*, which was completed in 1826, a footway being added in 1904. Tolls are charged for all but foot passengers. By railway the approach is by a *tubular bridge*, erected in 1848. This is somewhat unsightly in itself, but was made more so by the end towers, which were supposed to be in keeping with the architecture of the castle, but are really the one eyesore in a beautiful scene.

3. On leaving the bridge we have the *castle* immediately above us at the S.E. end of the town. It was built in 1284 by Henry de Elreton, the architect also of Carnarvon and Beaumaris castles, and, as it now stands, is one of the most satisfactory ruins in the whole kingdom. We enter by a little gateway on the N. side (admission 3d.). This point is close to the toll-gate on the bridge. We first ascend a flight of steps, cross the site of the drawbridge, pass under an archway, and reach a small platform W. of the main building, with three semicircular turrets on the R. The castle is an irregular rectangle, stretching from W. to E., with eight splendid round and embattled

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towers, four on the N. and four on the S. side. These divide the whole area into three bays, two of which constitute the outer or W. ward, and one the inner or E. ward. Passing through the principal gate we enter the great courtyard of the outer ward. On our R. are the ruins of the Great Hall, over 100 ft. in length, showing the remains of three Geometrical windows facing the court, and one arch of the roof vaulting. At the E. end is the garrison chapel, with one round window. A deep railed-off hole is the site of the cistern, where the water for the castle was stored. We now pass by a small gateway into the inner ward, a quadrangle surrounded by 4 of the 8 towers, all with small embattled turrets rising from the inside angle. Here were the State Apartments, chiefly on the E. and S. sides. The two E. towers are called the Queen's and King's towers. In the former is Queen Eleanor's oratory, which is inaccessible, but can be seen through a graceful arch. It is nearly circular, with vaulting-shafts rising to a central boss. There are three lancet windows, in which modern glass has been placed in memory of Queen Victoria. The whole effect is very Early English for its date. Under the King's tower is a dungeon. At the E. end of the castle is an embattled platform, from which note the beautiful E. front, between the end towers, with horseshoe-shaped windows under fine machicolations. The views from both platform and battlements can hardly be overpraised.

4. The *town walls* are similar in architecture to the castle and were built at the same time. They enclose an area nearly triangular, which has been likened in shape to a Welsh harp, and go up and down irregularly as the ground requires. The town has had the great good fortune to escape serious extension beyond this

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area. The estates of Bodlondeb and Benarth, N. and S., have prevented building on the shores of the estuary, and the only direction in which the modern builder has been active is N.W., where he will soon be pulled up by the slopes of Conway mountain. Along the circuit of the walls are 21 embattled towers, semicircular in shape. These are exclusive of the gateways, three of which are flanked by old towers, *i.e.* the Porth Uchaf, leading to the Sychnant Pass; the Porth Isaf, leading to the harbour; and the Porth-y-Felin or Mill-gate, now leading to the Goods Station. Besides these there are the Porth Castell, now leading to the suspension bridge, Porth-yr-Aden, at the N.E. angle, and Porth Bach, which leads N. through one of the 21 towers. Between Porth Uchaf and Porth-yr-Aden there is a walk along the whole of the N. wall.

5. The *church* is one of the most interesting in the district. It originally belonged to the Cistercian monastery erected in 1186, but no feature seems to recall that date. There are, however, several E.E. features which will suit the date 1245, at which time the monastery was partly restored after being sacked by the English (p. 49). These are (1) the three lancets W. of the tower, with the doorway below; (2) the chancel, with its rather more developed side windows, and E. buttresses. In 1284, on the expulsion of the monks (p. 52), their church became the parish church. The nave arcades, with strange heads in the spandrels, may belong to this date. Some Perp. features, such as the E. window and the upper story of the tower, are dated 1450. The fine font and beautiful screen of dark oak, with rood-loft attached, belong to the same period, though the linen pattern of the central door is later. Note also the oak stalls. There are two piscinæ, and a ruined holy-water stoup (inside S.

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door). On the S. aisle wall is a double arcade, with a tomb showing a floriated cross under one arch, and a woman's effigy under the other, said to be the mother of Archbishop John Williams.

There are other interesting monuments, some to the Wynne family, and one to Nicholas Hooke (on floor of chancel) died 1637, "who was the 4th child of his father, and the father of 27 children." Just outside the porch is a grave said to be that referred to in Wordsworth's "We are seven," an absolutely ridiculous claim.¹

6. The most remarkable private house in Conway, and indeed, in Snowdonia, is *Plâs Mawr* (admission 6d.), built in 1585 for Robert Wynne of Gwydir (Ch. VI.). It now belongs to Lord Mostyn, and is tenanted by the Royal Cambrian Academy of Art. No visitor should miss this most interesting Elizabethan house. All the designs and ornaments, heraldic and otherwise, are worthy of the most careful attention. Ten rooms in all are shown (1) The *Banqueting Hall*, where notice the windows, the plaster ceiling, and the mantelpiece with the Wynne arms. (2) Small kitchen with stone oven. (3) Still Room. (4) *Queen Elizabeth's sitting-room*, where the walls are partly panelled with oak, the plaster ceiling is decorated with animals, and the mantelpiece has the royal arms with E.R. (5) West kitchen, with a wonderful arched fireplace. The other rooms are upstairs. (6) Wynne room, supposed to have been the Earl of Leicester's bedroom, and

¹ The heroine of the poem certainly says that "two of us at Conway dwell," but it is obvious that these are not the two who were dead, and that the girl did not live at Conway herself. Besides, Wordsworth himself says he met her at Goodrich, on the Wye, and that he never knew her name. It would be interesting to learn who "identified" the grave!

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showing the Bear and Ragged Staff amongst other ornaments. (7) *Queen Elizabeth's Bedroom*, with another splendid plaster ceiling. Both ceiling and walls are again decorated with plaster animals of all sorts. (8) *The Reception Room*, with a plaster ceiling of a totally different kind, and a frieze supported by Caryatides. Just outside this room is a secret chamber. (9) *The Lantern Room*, containing an angular window in which a light was placed to light the court-yard below. This room is supposed to be haunted. (10) *The Council Room*. A spiral staircase ascends from near here to the look-out tower, whence there is a charming view. On descending, the inner court-yard should be seen. Note the "stepped gables" and the "bardic stone."¹

Other houses in Conway sometimes visited are *Aber Conway* (admission 3d.), built in 1400, and *Parlwr Mawr*, the birthplace of the famous John Williams, Archbishop of York. In Lancaster Square there is a fountain with a statue of Llewelyn the Great. On the quay-side is an old stone with a cross, called "the Conway stone."

II. A. EXPEDITIONS FROM CONWAY. I. *Bodlondeb*.—This is a charming short walk. Pass through the Porth Isaf, turn L. and then pass the Porth-yr-Aden. From here the so-called *New Walk* continues N. by the shore, all round the pretty wooded headland of Bodlondeb. After this a road turns L. and regains the main Penmaenmawr Road; but we may continue N. over the Morfa or Conway Marsh to the ferry, cross to Deganwy, and return by the far side of the estuary and the suspension bridge, a round of about 4 miles.

¹ All should purchase and read the excellent guide-book sold in the house itself. It draws attention to countless interesting details.



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2. *Conway to Llandudno* (4 m.).—Cross suspension bridge and causeway, and turn L. Deganwy is now about $1\frac{1}{4}$ m. distant, but the Llandudno road diverges R. in $\frac{1}{4}$ mile, and crosses high ground with the Deganwy hills L. About half-way there are cross-roads, where note Llanrhos Church and Gloddaeth (R.) and the Watch Tower (L.) A descent follows to Llandudno (see Ch. I.). The ascent of *Pabo Hill* from Conway is easy and remunerative (*v. p.* 46).

3. *Conway to Penmaenmawr* (*a*) by the Penmaen Bach road (4 m.), (*b*) by the Sychnant Pass ($4\frac{1}{2}$ m.), (*c*) by Conway mountain (about 5 m.).—Between Conway and Penmaenmawr there lies a group of mountains, consisting of Conway mountain, Penmaen Bach and Allt Wen, very steep-sided and rocky, and of singular charm and impressiveness considering their height, which scarcely ever rises above 800 ft. They form the commencement of the Snowdonian mass, and are separated by the Sychnant Pass from the higher but less interesting mountains to the immediate S. of them. (*a*) Is the coast road which runs N. of the mountains and is perfectly level, except that it rises a little where it is carried round the headland of Penmaen Bach; (*b*) runs over a pass 550 ft. in height, dull on the Conway side, but highly impressive on the far side; (*c*) is for pedestrians only, and is decidedly superior to (*b*), since it ascends from Conway by an easy but delightful hill-path and joins the Sychnant road just at the point where the beautiful descent begins.

(*a*) We leave Conway by the Porth Bach on the N. side of the walls. For $\frac{1}{2}$ m. the direction is mainly N. Then, after passing under the railway bridge, we turn more W. On the L. Conway mountain rises above us for 2 m., showing a very steep and impressive front.

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On the R. is Conway Marsh (Morfa), with the Bay and the Great Orme beyond. Presently the sea comes close on the R. and we diverge R. and ascend a little where the road is carried round the headland of Penmaen Bach, which falls to the sea far more precipitously than its bigger brother, Penmaen Mawr. The rock has had to be cut away in places, and at the extreme point a spur of rock has been left standing on the seaward side of the road. Here the Menai Straits appear, with Anglesey and Puffin Island beyond. Penmaen Mawr headland now shows in front, and Y Foel Llys more to the L. The road runs straight to the town in about a mile and a half. The railway is on the R. most of the route, but tunnels Penmaen Bach headland.

(b) Leave Conway by the W. gate (Porth Uchaf). The road immediately forks. Take the R. hand road, which leads W. and gradually ascends. On the R. is the long slope of the Conway Mountain, near at hand, and on the L. the lower part of the Conway valley and its bounding mountains, Tal-y-Fan being prominent. As we ascend, the view contracts, and at the top of the pass (517 ft.) the whole prospect is barred by high walls. The far side, however, makes amends. The road descends steeply on the S. side of the pass, round a shoulder of Craig-y-Fedwen. On the N. side *Allt Wen* stands up grandly for every inch of its 700 ft., showing a steep side of red screes, and a conical top. The effect produced by this little mountain quite overthrows pre-conceptions based on mere altitude. It looks almost inaccessible, and yet it can be easily climbed in ten minutes from the top of the pass. In front are Y Foel Llys and Penmaen Mawr, with a strip of the sea and Anglesey behind. As we bend L., Y Foel Llys comes more into sight,

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standing up grandly close at hand. At the bottom is Capelulo, a hamlet of Dwygyfylchi (a little R.). On the L. is the entrance to the Fairy Glen, an imposing wooded hollow. The road again slightly ascends and skirts the side of Y Foel Llys till Penmaenmawr is entered.

N.B. Sychnant="Dry Valley," probably referring to the absence of any stream. Allt Wen="White Mountain," though "Red Mountain" would be a more appropriate name.

(c) An absolutely charming and quite easy walk. Leave Conway by the N. gate (Porth Bach), but almost at once turn L. over a railway bridge. Turn R. again at once, and continue beside the railway till next corner, where turn a little S., and almost at once R. again down *Mountain Road*, at the end of which turn L., and the foot of the mountain will soon be reached. Here of the two paths take the upper one. The lower ascends to the Sychnant Pass, but the views are not so commanding. The upper path becomes a pleasant grass track on the S. side of the mountain, which slopes upward so slowly that the top is not reached for more than two miles. From the very first the retrospective views of Conway are good, and a beautiful view of the Conway valley gradually unfolds itself. The upper reaches show to great effect, with the far-off Arenig Fawr standing beyond them. At intervals the path is so near the main ridge, that it is worth while to step up to it and include the sea-view N. When the top (808 ft.) is close on the R., leave the path awhile, and climb to it. All the way up there have been fine views of the Creuddyn peninsula and the Conway valley, and now the mountains surrounding Penmaenmawr appear, and on the L. Tal-y-Fan, with Y Foel Fras and Llwydmor behind. At the top is Caer

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Lleion, a picturesque fort, surrounded by a ruined stone wall. A broad green pathway now descends to the original path, which continues to the top of the Sychnant Pass. The three mountains are connected by a high irregular tableland, a delightful rambling-ground, from which all three can easily be ascended. Note that their W. and N.W. sides are precipitous.

4. *From Conway up the Conway valley (a) by steamer from Conway to Trefriw, which only runs in the summer, (b) by the railway, (c) by road E. of the river, (d) by road W. of the river.*—(a) and (b) do not require separate description, since the views gained are almost exactly the same as those from (c). (d) is somewhat inferior, but a pleasant alternative.

(c) *Conway to Llanrwst by the E. road (12 m.).*—Before ascending the Conway valley, the visitor should clearly understand what he has come to see. Charming as the valley is, it has sometimes been praised on the wrong lines. The lower part is a wide estuary, lying in comparatively flat country, and the chief feature is the view of the mountain background as seen beyond the estuary. (For this, of course, high water is necessary.) The upper part is narrow, steep-sided and well wooded, and gradually improves until at Bettws-y-Coed the scenery becomes first-rate. But two things should be noticed. First, that the valley keeps some miles to the E. of the high mountains, so that none of them are visible from the upper reaches. Secondly, that the E. side of the valley is comparatively tame the whole way, and offers no striking points of interest. One other caution may be given, that Gray's lines

On a rock whose haughty brow
Frowns o'er old Conway's foaming flood

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are pure imagination, and no scene will be met with at all corresponding to them. When all this is realized, given high tide and sunshine, the expedition will be found delightful. Cross the bridge and causeway, pass Llandudno Junction (R.), and take the first turning (R.) after passing the estuary. The first view is the fine retrospect of Conway, seen from the far side of the estuary. Then the view opens up the valley, and at the first milestone nearly the whole circle of mountains appears beyond the lake-like stretch of the wide estuary. On the skyline, starting from R. to L., are Tal-y-Fan with its long rugged top, Y Foel Fras, Y. Foel Grach, and Carnedd Llewelyn, with Carnedd Dafydd just peeping over its shoulder. For the next 4 m. the road is less interesting than the railway. It leaves the estuary, passes two hamlets, then traverses a long hill of 300 ft., descending to the rail and river at *Tal-y-Cafn*, and regaining the mountain-view. The estuary is still fine, and the mountains seen now include Pen Helyg and Pen Llithrig. A fine new bridge has been here thrown over the river, but at present we keep on the E. bank. About a mile farther we see nearly opposite, on the far side, the old church of *Caerhun*. A mile or so farther a striking change takes place in the valley, which becomes narrower and better defined. A line of steep and densely wooded cliffs falls into it from the W., which entirely hides the higher mountains. Streams break through the depressions in the cliffs, and descend to the valley by a succession of cataracts, first the Porthllwyd and then the Dolgarog falls, (p. 124). Opposite the Dolgarog falls (3 m. from Llanrwst) we pass on the L. *Plâs Maenan*, the site of the abbey to which Edward I. transferred the monks of Aberconwy (p. 52). Not a trace remains of the

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buildings, and there are no relics of the abbey except those preserved in Llanrwst church. The valley strath opposite Plâs Maenan is still called the Abbey. During the next three miles note first Trefriw Wells, on the far side of the valley, and then Trefriw itself, at the mouth of the Crafnant valley. Llanrwst is now soon reached (see Ch. VI.).

(d) *Conway to Llanrwst by the W. road* (11 m.).—Leave Conway either by the W. gate (Porth Uchaf) and at once turn L. ; or by the S. road, just W. of the castle, and turn first R. and then again L. The two roads join at Gyffin about 2 m. S. of the town. For nearly 4 m. the road undulates among low hills of the comparatively uninteresting Upper Silurian formation, and with no views of the river, except just one peep about the second milestone. At last we run downhill through Tyn-y-Groes into the valley. The scenery now improves. At about $4\frac{1}{2}$ m. from Conway we have *Caerhun* (L.), the site of Conovium, one of the three authentic Roman stations in Snowdonia. Take a public footpath, which starts almost opposite the point where a road comes in (R.). A little church is built on the site, with a Perpendicular E. window, and at the W. end an old stone with a crucifix rudely carved, under an ivy-clad bell-cot. All else is modern. Around is a square enclosure, surrounded by a well-built wall, with a lych-gate and some old yews. The whole scene is pleasing, but nothing is left of Roman origin. The enclosure may mark the limits of the Roman fort. In the field between it and the river have been discovered the foundations of a hypocaust, and Roman tiles bearing the stamp of the 20th legion. Returning to the road we pass Tal-y-bont, about the 6th milestone, and cross the Dilyn stream, after the wooded hills begin to rise high on our immediate

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R., excluding all distant views. At $6\frac{1}{2}$ m. we cross the Porthllwyd stream, at $7\frac{1}{2}$ m. the Dolgarog stream. The waterfalls are very well worth stopping for (p. 123). A little before reaching the bridge over the Porthllwyd stream a ruined cromlech will be found a little L. of the road. Then we pass first Trefriw Wells, then the hotel near which is the landing-place of the Conway steamer, and finally Trefriw itself ($9\frac{1}{2}$ m.). There turn L., and in $1\frac{1}{2}$ m. more, after crossing a bridge over the Conway, we reach Llanrwst (Ch. VI.). The views on this road are distinctly inferior to those on the E. side, especially in the first 5 m., but Caerhun, the waterfalls, and Trefriw make some amends.

II B. NOTE ON EXPEDITIONS FROM TAL-Y-CAFN.—Tal-y-Cafn has a pleasant hotel, well spoken of. But it deserves notice mainly because its railway station, close to the bridge over the Conway, renders it a convenient starting-place, easily reached by visitors staying at Conway and Bettws-y-Coed, for two or three expeditions to the W. and S.W. If they were done directly from Conway, an extra three miles' walk of an uninteresting character would be added in each case.

These expeditions are: (1) The *Bwlch-y-Ddeufaen Pass*, described in detail the reverse way (p. 91). The start from Tal-y-Cafn is W. through Tyn-y-Groes to Roe Wen. (2) The *Pen-y-Castell ridge*, consisting of Pen-y-Gaer (c. 1200), which has an ancient stone fort on the summit, Pen-y-Gader, and the highly serrated Pen-y-Castell (2034). The ridge, which is a lateral projection of Drum, forms a pretty foreground to the views of the lower part of the Conway valley. From Tal-y-Cafn it is a good hour's walk to the foot of Pen-y-Gaer, whence the ridge can be ascended to Drum.

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Hence the tourist can either return by the Bwlch-y-Ddeufaen, or descend to Aber on the far side. (3) *Llyn Dulyn and Melynlllyn*, two fine, deep-set circular tarns lying in rocky basins in a wild, desolate region, close under the great E. wall of Y Foel Fras and Y Foel Grach. They are very inaccessible, but well worth seeing. From Tal-y-Cafn ascend the W. side of the Conway valley till Tal-y-Bont is reached, where turn R. and ascend by a path the whole valley of the Afon Dulyn (see also under Pen Helyg, Ch. VIII.).

CHAPTER III

PENMAENMAWR

[*Approaches*—Chester and Conway (rail), p. 37 ; Llandudno and Conway (road and rail), pp. 59, 60 ; Bangor (road and rail), see reverse direction, p. 76.]

I. 1. THE central ridge of the northern half of the Snowdonian mountains, diminishing greatly in height as it stretches northward, reaches the sea at the two headlands of Penmaen Mawr¹ and Penmaen Bach. Between these points lies the region to be described in this chapter, consisting of about 4 m. of coast, from which two circular valleys rise rapidly to the high plateau connected with the main mountain ridge. To the E. the Sychnant Pass leads over the end of the ridge to the Conway district, while to the W. the road, carried round the bold sea-front of Penmaen Mawr, proceeds by Llanfairfechan and Aber to Bangor.

¹ To avoid endless confusion, it should be noticed once for all that Penmaen Mawr is the mountain, Penmaen-mawr the town.

The only roads which enter the Penmaenmawr country are these two, and that which passes round the front of Penmaen Bach from Conway.

Sunk deep below the lofty moorland plateau, and cut off by high ground in every direction except the sea, rest the twin isolated valleys of Dwygyfylchi and Penmaenmawr. Both are semi-circular, and are joined together in a way suggesting the shape of an ϵ with its opening turned seawards. At the point of junction the beautiful rounded hill of Y Foel Llys rises up 1200 ft., but leaves a space of nearly $\frac{1}{2}$ m. between it and the sea. To the E. is the little hamlet of Dwygyfylchi, near the centre of its flat strath, which is small but beautifully green. Beyond it the valley is closed eastward by the fine precipitous sides of Penmaen Bach and Allt Wen, mountains of only about 700 ft., but fortunate alike in their colouring and the beauty of the fir woods which partly clothe them. Directly E. of these mountains is the Sychnant Pass, at the foot of which is Capelulo, a hamlet of Dwygyfylchi, at the entrance of the Fairy Glen, a deep-set narrow ravine which runs up between the slopes of Craig-y-Fedwen (N.) and Y Foel Llys (S.) to the plateau beyond. So far the Dwygyfylchi valley has escaped much overbuilding, but now new houses, the outskirts of Penmaenmawr, are creeping round the end of Y Foel Llys.

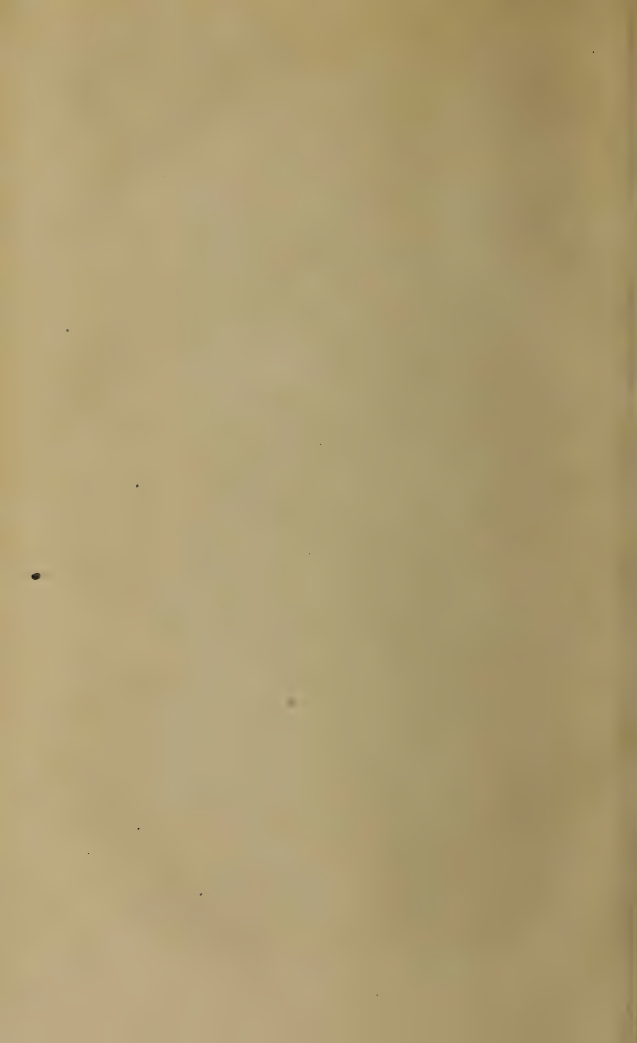
The W. valley is that of Penmaenmawr. It has no level strath, but rises steeply from the coast, then for a while becomes somewhat more level, till the foot of the steep-sided hills is reached, which stand round it in an unbroken semi-circle, keeping a general level of about 1200 ft., from Y Foel Llys to Penmaen Mawr, the principal intervening points being Craig-y-Fodwch and Craig Llwyd. From below it appears as if there

was a range of several hills, but when climbed these are found to be only the edge of the elevated plateau lying beyond, above which even the higher points rise very slightly. This continuous mountain background, regular and delightful, gives a unique attractiveness to the Penmaenmawr valley, all views of which are charming, though far the best are those gained from the higher slopes. An extra feature is given by the beautiful sea prospect. Close to the shore on the R. is the Great Orme, L. of which is an uninterrupted stretch of the Irish Sea. Then in the centre is the fascinating little Puffin Island. A little more to the L. is Anglesey, the N.E. coast of which stretches into the distance, until it turns at Lynas Point, 19 m. away. On the extreme L. is the opening of the Menai Straits, with the S.E. coast of Anglesey behind, until it is cut off by the promontory of Penmaen Mawr. The lighthouses on Penmon and Lynas Points are almost in a line, and after dark their beacon lights play a fascinating game of in and out. The sunset effects over the sea are often most lovely.

So far the valley has been described as left by nature, but in referring to the works of man the tone of comment must be changed. The popular watering-place of Penmaenmawr is quite modern, having been begun only after the railway from Chester to Holyhead was carried along this coast. It is built on the sloping bank which starts close to the beach. On the whole, judged by the generally low standard of Welsh towns, it stands fairly high in picturesqueness, most of the lodging-houses being detached, well-built, and shaded by abundant trees. But an exception to this must be made of the ugly group of shops in the centre. Also the position of the railway, between town and sea-front, though practically unavoidable, goes far to



PENMAENMAWR FROM GREEN GORGE



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spoil the latter. But the worst eyesore of the place is furnished by the granite quarries, which have entirely ruined two noble hills with spoil-heaps and hideous buildings, besides giving us the sordid village of Penmaenen.

Penmaenmawr owes a great deal to the patronage of the Right Hon. W. E. Gladstone, who visited it year after year, and stated in October 1882 that he owed to it in no small degree his health and strength. A statue of Gladstone has been set up in the town, but it is unfortunately too small for the open air, and looks insignificant.

II. 1. *Paths to the Hills*.—Penmaenmawr is one of the most delightful places imaginable for short rambles. It is true that the walking area is somewhat circumscribed, and also that to enjoy it it is necessary to climb, though in very modest fashion. The real glory of the place is the hill circle, and first of all to be described are the paths leading to it. Exclusive of those leading to Y Foel Llys and Penmaen Mawr (see paragraphs 2 and 3), there are three paths in all.

(a) *Mountain Lane to the Green Gorge*.—From the cross-roads in the centre of the town take the E. road, and, where it forks at the Mountain View Hotel, take the R. branch, but at once turn up R. to Croesffordd Lane. This ascends steeply and is continued by Mountain Lane, after reaching which no further directions are necessary. The lane about half-way passes close to little Ffrith Demonddydd, the cub of Y Foel Llys. Then, turning again, it climbs steeply to the Green Gorge, the entrance to a most delightful rambling-ground. The Gorge itself is a broad sloping band of green turf, above which on both sides rise banks of heather. Y Foel Llys is L. and Craig-y-Fodwch (1244) R. Abundant direction-posts indi-

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cate many pleasant walks. From the lower end of the Gorge a path strikes L. to the Jubilee Path round Y Foel Llys. At the top end at least four paths diverge, one to join the far end of the Jubilee Path, a second to the Fairy Glen, a third straight on to Llangelynin Old church, and a fourth (R.) going round the back of Craig-y-Fodwch, and past a farm where tea can be had, to Meini Hirion.

(b) *The Central Path*.—From the cross-roads turn S. into Fernbrook Road, which ascends a little and turns L. Take a lane R. (between the Preparatory School and Tabet). This ascends past the houses, and crosses a field into *Craig Llwyd Road*, a level terrace-road with charming views. Here turn R., and, after passing a conspicuous house L., turn L. by a path just before a gateway is reached. The path leads presently into fields, turns L., then R., and then decidedly L. at the foot of Craig-y-Fodwch, and passing a little above Plas Uchaf Farm runs into the Mountain Lane just opposite the highest house. The fields are pleasant, and on the whole this ascent to the Green Gorge is preferable.

(c) *The Cwm*.—This is really the main head of the Penmaenmawr valley, from which the principal stream descends, between Craig-y-Fodwch and Craig Llwyd. It is by far the most charming approach to the hills. First we ascend to the Craig Llwyd Road, either by the route described in (b) or by starting W. from the cross-roads, along the Bangor Road, and taking the first turn L. (Gilfach Road). When it forks, take the L. (Cwm Road). A little further a public footpath R. leads nearly straight to the Cwm. When the Craig Llwyd Road is reached, turn along it a little R., until the lane to Craig Llwyd Farm diverges L. Direction-posts are abundant. After passing the farm, avoid

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a green track ascending R. to the quarries, and continue by the line of the fence round into the Cwm. This is a charming hollow with green sides and wooded bottom. A grassy path ascends on the R., from which the retrospective views are very beautiful. At the top turn L., and cross a plank bridge, which has been thrown across the marshy ground from which the streamlet flows. At this point a good path from Craig Llwyd comes in on the R. Beyond the bridge is a gate in the wall, after passing through which turn a little R., and in a minute we reach the so-called "Old Road" (p. 77). Crossing this we ascend for a little way a slope beyond to *Meini Hirion*, two ancient stone circles, not of much account, though their position makes them more visited than most of the Carnarvonshire antiquities. That to the W. consists of small stones, only two or three of which are erect. That to the E. is finer, with eight or ten erect stones, some of which are fairly large. These circles are considered burial-places of the Neolithic or the Bronze Age. It is remarkable that a Bronze Age burial-place, with urns full of calcined bones, was accidentally discovered in Penmaenmawr itself in 1889.

From the glorious upland plateau, on the edge of which we are standing, there is a great choice of rambles. In one direction we can climb Penmaen Mawr, taking if we please Craig Llwyd *en route*, or descend by the "Old Road" to Llanfairfechan. In another we can work round by the back of Craig-y-Fodwch to the Green Gorge, or diverge *en route* (R.) for Tal-y-Fan. Or lastly we may strike boldly across the moorland to the great mountains lying S. (see p. 80).

2. *Y Foel Llys* ("the hill of the palace," 1180).—This little mountain forms no inconsiderable part of the attractions of Penmaenmawr. It is steep and rounded,

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with dark heathery sides and a top of bare white rock. It is a glorious rambling-ground, being quite covered with paths and tracks, of which the finest is the *Jubilee Path*, cut on a level, high up on its side. It starts L. from the lower end of the Green Gorge. At first the Penmaenmawr valley lies below, with a fairy-like sea-view beyond ; then, at a turn, the green Dwygyfylchi valley appears, from which there rise on the far side the steep crags of Penmaen Bach and Allt Wen, showing a beautiful red hue where they are not covered with luxuriant firwoods. More R. is the Sychnant Pass. At the end of the path we may either keep on a track R., and go round the mountain and back to the Green Gorge, or diverge a little L. to the head of the Fairy Glen (see p. 74).

The Jubilee Path may also be reached from the Old Conway road. About $\frac{1}{2}$ m. from Penmaenmawr turn R. by a track at the foot of the little projection of Y Foel Llys called *Trwyn-y-Wulfa* (see p. 83). From this point several tracks ascend the hill and zigzag up to the Jubilee Path. Somewhat further along the Old Conway road there is a more regular path, which joins the Jubilee Path close to its end.

The summit may be reached from the Jubilee Path, but the climb will be found rough and steep. The best ascent is from the lower end of the Green Gorge. Turn L. to the Jubilee Path, but on reaching two pillars turn back R., and in a few minutes take a path L., which works round the hill right to the top. The view is limited but beautiful, especially to the N., where Llandudno is set between the two Ormes, and Conway is well seen with the estuary and valley. More in front is the beautiful hill-group consisting of Penmaen Bach, Allt Wen and Conway Mountain. After the Sychnant Pass the range is continued by

Craig-y-Fedwen, Cefn ma Namor, Tal-y-Fan, Drum, Y Drosogl (1), terminating with Y Foel Fras and Llwydmor, the highest mountains in sight.

3. *Penmaen Mawr* (1553).—This fine headland is unequalled in N. Wales, both for its massive proportions, and lofty rounded top. It is not, however, like parts of the Great Orme, a cliff-end descending sheer into the sea, since both road and railway pass beneath it, and quarrymen work merrily on its seaward slopes. It seems worth while to point this out, in view of the many exaggerated descriptions which have been given of the headland, but the visitor need not fear to find it deficient in grandeur. Near the top there is a large prehistoric fort, but so overgrown by heather and cut up by the quarries, that it requires the eye of an expert to discover it. Lord Lytton has described the army of Gruffydd ap Llewelyn as encamped in this fort, when he was attacked by Harold, Earl of Wessex, in 1063. In both 1277 and 1282 Penmaen Mawr was a formidable part of Llewelyn's defensive position against Edward I.

Perhaps the best way to climb the mountain is to make it the final goal of a day's ramble round the Penmaenmawr mountains, starting with Y Foel Llys. But there is also a direct ascent as follows. Proceed about half a mile on the Bangor Road, as far as Chapel Street (L.), where there is a notice "Road to Penmaen Mawr Mountain." On reaching a chapel, turn R. and then work gradually upwards R. until the cottages are passed, and an iron gate reached, leading to our path. The way up is now clear enough. It is not attractive, since the path is closely beset by quarries on both sides, and even on the top one is not wholly safe from blasting operations. But the fresh sea air and the glorious view atone for everything. Owing

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to the comparative isolation of the mountain, the view is particularly good. The gem of the whole is the vista of the Straits, which stretch S.W. from our very feet to Bangor, with the Menai Bridges beyond, and green level country on both sides. The sea is seen to encircle Anglesey, right round Holyhead, and back to Puffin Island. To the N. the Penmaenmawr valley looks its best, with Llandudno and the two Ormes beyond, and a peep into the Conway valley. The range of mountains starts N. with the ridge running from Penmaen Bach to Tal-y-Fan. Then come Pen-y-Castell, Y Drosogl (1), Y Foel Fras the central dominating height, with a bit of Carnedd Llewelyn showing over it, Llwydmor, Carnedd Dafydd, Bera Mawr, Y Drosogl (2) and Moel Wnion. Further off in the same direction are the Nant Ffrancon mountains of Carnedd-y-Filiast and Bronllwyd, with the Elidyr showing above them, Moel Eilio, and the distant Rivals. A descent may be made E. to the plateau from which the huge dome of the mountain top rises. Here we may either turn R. and descend to Llanfairfechan, a much longer walk than it looks from above, or continue E. to Meini Hirion and descend by the Cwm (L.).

4. *The Fairy Glen* (entrance 3d.).—This name is given to the lower part of the valley between Y Foel Llys and Craig-y-Fedwen. It is reached by taking the Old Conway Road for a mile and a half to Capelulo, the foot of the Sychnant Pass. The approach to the Glen R. is very attractive, since it shows as a deep-set and well-wooded ravine. The Glen is decidedly pretty, but it is perhaps a pity that it has been made into a show place, since expectation is thereby raised too high. The shady paths under the tree-canopy are delightful enough, but the lower part is somewhat sombre. The stream has scanty waters, and shows no

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conspicuous falls until the upper part, where two or three cascades come into one attractive picture. At the top, where the trees suddenly give place to a bare upland valley, a path R. leads to the Jubilee Path or to the Green Gorge. By turning L. instead we can strike a path to Llangelynin Old Church, or climb the ridge of Craig-y-Fedwen and continue onward by Cefn ma Namor to Tal-y-Fan.

5. *Path to Llangelynin Old Church* (often called "the old village"—about 3 m.).—This is a very pleasant but easy upland walk. Ascend to the Green Gorge, at the far end of which take the central path of three. This descends a little, crosses the valley of the stream that forms the Fairy Glen lower down, and ascends to the main ridge between Craig-y-Fedwen and Cefn ma Namor (here a little over 1000 ft.). From the top we look down into a shallow upland valley, enclosed at the head by a spur of Tal-y-Fan (R.) and by a similar but more detached hill called Cerrig-y-Ddinas (L.). The church is visible in the depression between these two hills, the furthest of the scattered buildings in the valley. Directly the moorland is passed, the path runs nearly straight to the church over a succession of grass meadows connected by step-stiles. As long as all gates and lanes are avoided no mistake can be made. All the way there are beautiful views L. of Conway. The church when reached is rude and plain, and interesting mainly for its lonely situation. It dates from the fourteenth century, and shows a plain pointed window, a Perpendicular window, a stoup near the door, and a stone bell-cot. All lovers of scenery should go a little way down the lane which descends E. from the church, turn into the first gate L. and then go a few yards to the brow of the hill. From here there is perhaps the best and most com-

prehensive view of the Conway valley, extending to Conway in one direction, and nearly to Bettws-y-Coed in the other, with the far-off Arenig standing beyond. The meadows about here are famous for lilies and daffodils. The lane will lead to Conway in about 4 m., or Tal-y-Cafn in 3 m., but it is better to return to Penmaenmawr, to which the following is an alternative route. Start returning in the direction you came, but after crossing three or four stiles, diverge L. by a cart track leading to the second farm you reach. Pass in front of the farm, and in two more fields you will reach the open moorland. Climb a little and you will find a cart track just above you. Turn L., keep this track, and you will reach the depression between Tal-y-Fan and Cefn ma Namor. No mistake can now be made. The path descends to the valley and goes straight across it nearly to Meini Hirion, from which descend R. to Penmaenmawr by the Cwm.

6. *Penmaenmawr to Conway* (4 m.).—See description reverse way, pp. 59-62.

7. *Penmaenmawr to Bangor* (10 m.).—The first mile is disappointing, among the squalid cottages of Penmaenen, with quarries near at hand. Then the road, without ascending much, is carried right round the headland, with a grand view of Great Orme in one direction, and the Menai Straits in the other. The road we are on replaced the famous cliff-road, graphically described by Sir John Wynne (p. 114), writing about 1625. It was cut through the steep hillside, about 600 ft. above sea level, in parts not more than 3 ft. wide, apparently unprotected by any wall, and kept in indifferent repair by a resident hermit. "If either man or beast should fall," writes Sir John, "sea and rock would strive and contend whether of both should do him the greatest mischief." It is strange

to reflect that this was at the time the main road to Holyhead. That it was not adapted for wheeled traffic we gather from a well-known passage in Macaulay's history. "In 1685," he writes, "a viceroy, going to Ireland, was forced, between Conway and Beaumaris, to walk great part of the way, and his lady was carried on a litter. His coach was, with great difficulty and the help of many hands, brought after him entire. In general carriages were taken to pieces at Conway, and borne on the shoulders of stout Welsh peasants to the Menai Straits." It seems that the terrors the cliff-road inspired were so great that travellers sometimes preferred the rough and circuitous "old road" over the mountains, which diverged L. of the Sychnant Pass, a little short of the top, and, passing behind Y Foel Llys, wound round to Meini Hirion and so down to Llanfairfechan. At last, after many attempts to improve the cliff-road had failed, an entirely new road was built on a lower level about 1770. One of the earliest travellers by it was Dr Johnson on August 18th, 1774. He was afraid of "passing Penmaen Mawr but by bright daylight," and started late in the day from Conway "with some anxiety, but came to Penmaen Mawr by daylight, and found a way lately made, very easy, and very safe. It was cut smooth and enclosed between parallel walls, the outer of which secures the passage from the precipice, which is deep and dreadful, the inner from the loose stones which the shattered steep would pour down." It is certainly odd that our ancestors seem to have been as much afraid of the imaginary danger of falling stones, as of slipping down into the sea, which on the cliff road was quite a possible accident.

At 2 m. from Penmaenmawr we pass the headland, and descend to Llanfairfechan. The road is

closely pent by trees and houses, and no real view is got of the town. For the next mile or so the large estate of Bryn-y-Neuadd blocks the view R. When this is passed, it is seen that the mountains have retired quite half a mile from the Menai Straits. This interval, which tends to increase as we proceed, forms a poor foreground to the otherwise fine view over the Lavan sands to Anglesey beyond. On the L. the nearer hills, from Carreg Fawr to Maes-y-Gaer, overhanging Aber, are shapely and picturesque, and allow glimpses of the higher Yr Orsedd group behind, with the mass of Llwydmor in the background. About $4\frac{1}{2}$ m. from Penmaenmawr we pass Aber, at the outlet of a well-wooded glen, which forms a most attractive gateway to the mountains. After this, the long bare slope of Moel Wnion is the sole object in view L., until it gives way to a range of lower wooded hills. In front are Penrhyn Park and Castle, which drive the road quite a mile inland before they can be passed. As we near the bridge over the Ogwen, a view of the Nant Ffrancon mountains opens L. Then Penrhyn Park with its uncompromising wall begins on our R. and there are no more views. Directly after passing the park gates, the road turns sharp R., and in another long mile we turn sharp L. into Bangor.

III. THE PENMAENMAWR MOUNTAINS.—Penmaen Mawr and Y Foel Llys are so closely bound up with the general scheme of rambles and walks in this centre, that it seemed best to include them in section II. The only other mountain distinctively belonging to this centre is Tal-y-Fan, but it will be as well also to indicate the route by which Penmaen Mawr can be used as a starting-point for the loftier mountains which lie S.

I. *Tal-y-Fan* (2000) is the dominant height on the

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ridge of high ground separating the Conway and Penmaenmawr districts. This ridge, starting with the headland of Penmaen Bach and Allt Wen, dips to the Sychnant Pass, and then rises to Craig-y-Fedwen (about 900), then to Cefn ma Namor (1283), and finally to Tal-y-Fan itself; which, though not one of the highest mountains, yet secures a position among the Snowdonian group by reason of its long and level, yet highly serrated, summit. From Conway it may be made the centre of a glorious day's ramble, by diverging L. at the top of the Sychnant Pass, and following the gradually ascending ridge till Tal-y-Fan itself is reached. Then, after traversing its rocky top, we may cross to Y Foel Llwyd, a sort of "dodd" to Tal-y-Fan on the S.W., and descend 500 ft. to the Bwlch-y-Ddeufaen, whence a descent may be made to Conway or Tal-y-Cafn. Or, if the tourist has abundance of time, strength, and energy, he may take the finest walk in the whole of northern Snowdonia by continuing S. along the whole of the main ridge to Y Foel Fras and Carnedd Llewelyn, finally descending to Bethesda. But this splendid ramble should only be undertaken by strong walkers under favourable conditions, for to be benighted among the precipices of the Carneddau would be a dangerous situation. From Penmaenmawr the direct route is as follows. Climb the Cwm to the "old road," where turn L. Soon a d.p. by a wall directs us to turn R. The path descends a little to a somewhat marshy moorland, intersected by four or five rivulets, the head waters of the Fairy Glen stream. Then we ascend to the slight depression between Cefn ma Namor (L.) and Tal-y-Fan (R.). At the top a quarry track diverges R., and may be taken for some distance. Above the quarry there is a green track which con-

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tinues nearly to the top, but the climb is in any case quite obvious. (*N.B.*—In *descending* by the green track, beware of the quarry, which is invisible from above.) The N. end of the summit ridge is reached at a height of about 1900 ft. A stone wall runs along the irregular rocky top and gives the effect in many places of a cairn, but the real cairn is half a mile distant, at the S.W. edge of the ridge, and is hardly worth the extra toil, except for those who intend to descend to the Bwlch-y-Ddeufaen. The most beautiful part of the view is from N.W. to N.E., including Penmaen Mawr, Anglesey, and Puffin Island; Y Foel Llys and the Conway Mountain group; lovely Conway, with the estuary gleaming in two places; and the Creuddyn peninsula beyond, with Deganwy, Llandudno, and the two Ormes. All are crowned with summer sea which stretches E. beyond Rhyl. S.S.E. is a very beautiful view of the upper Conway valley with Arenig in the far distance. S. and S.W. is a group of great mountains. Starting L. we have in front Pen-y-Gaer, Pen-y-Gader, and Pen-y-Castell. Further off are Creigiau Gleision, Pen Llithrig with Moel Siabod showing over it, and Pen Helyg. Then come Carnedd Llewelyn, Y Foel Grach, Y Foel Fras (with Drum and Y Drosogl (1) nearly in front of it), and Llwydmor.

2. *Penmaenmawr to Y Foel Fras and Carnedd Llewelyn.*—Y Foel Fras is described in the next chapter, as the principal mountain in the Aber district. Its ascent however from Penmaenmawr has some peculiar features worth noting. Once more we begin by ascending the Cwm, and then go on to the top of the slope a little beyond Meini Hirion, with the rounded Moelfre (1422) a little R. We are now on the edge of a remarkable upland plateau, consisting of a flat desolate moorland from 1000 to 1200 ft. above sea level.

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On all sides the mountains rise above it. To the L. are Tal-y-Fan and its continuation Y Foel Llwyd, with a line of telegraph posts conspicuously running across the depression between them. Next comes Y Drosgl (1) nearly in front of the mighty Y Foel Fras, which, with its huge buttress Llwydmor, completely shuts out any further view S. Somewhat nearer, in front of Llwydmor, is a line of three rounded hills, of which Yr Orsedd is the chief.

We have to make our way to the summit of the Bwlch-y-Ddeufaen, which, as yet unseen, lies between Y Foel Llwyd and Y Drosgl (1). Take a straight line across the moorland almost due S., disregarding the interlacing tracks. Presently we descend a little to a "turbary," *i.e.* an upland peat-moss, which in wet weather will be found unpleasant. Then we ascend a little, and work round the end of Y Foel Llwyd to the Bwlch-y-Ddeufaen (1403), (p. 91). Looking backwards, we see that all the Penmaenmawr hills have disappeared, except Penmaen Mawr itself, and the little tump of Moelfre. W. there is a peep of the sea near Llanfairfechan. For Y Foel Fras we have to continue more or less in the same direction by climbing Y Drosgl (1). A wall on the L., succeeded by a fence, guides us safely to the top of the ridge, from which all is clear. There is a beautiful view of the tarn Llyn-an-Afon, which lies in a deep grassy hollow in front, with Y Foel Fras (L.) and Llwydmor (R.). More to the R., the Yr Orsedd group shows beautiful rounded outlines. The route now turns L. at a right angle to the cairn on Y Drosgl (2036), then bends R. again over Drum, and finally climbs to Y Foel Fras (for full description see next chapter). The way to Carnedd Llewelyn (Ch. IX.) is over Y Foel Fras and along the main ridge of the mountains by Yr Arryg and Y Foel Grach.

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CHAPTER IV

LLANFAIRFECHAN AND ABER

[*Approaches* (road and rail) Conway and Penmaenmawr, pp. 59, 76 ; Bangor, see reverse direction, p. 78.]

I. 1. THE district described in this chapter is that stretch of the coast which lies opposite the wide entrance to the Menai Straits, from Penmaen Mawr to Penrhyn Park, together with the hinterland of lofty mountains, reaching inland to the central ridge. S.W. of Penmaen Mawr the mountains recede from the sea, leaving a plain over which runs the road to Bangor (p. 76). The two places with which this chapter principally deals are widely different in character, a thriving modern watering-place, and a small hamlet, yet with memories which reach far back into early history.

2. *Llanfairfechan* ("little St Mary's"), nestling close under the S.W. slope of Penmaen Mawr, was within memory a small Welsh village, lying back some distance from the sea, and lately increased in population by the development of the Penmaen Mawr quarries. But the watering-place by the sea only dates from 1860, when, through the exertions of Mr John Platt, M.P., owner of the great estate of Bryn Neuadd, S.W. of the town, a station was opened on the Holyhead line. Neat villas and lodging-houses at once began to spring up, and of late years the development of the little town makes it quite a formidable rival to Penmaenmawr. The beach is open and breezy, little obstructed by the railway, and catches the last bit of open sea just before the Menai Straits begin. Penmaen Mawr, towering above, ought to be magnificent, but un-

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fortunately this side of the mountain has been even more spoilt by quarrying than the other. The sea view is charming, comprising the entrance of the Straits, with Puffin Island, Anglesey, and Beaumaris beyond. Lastly there is a fine background of mountains, though without the unique perfection of the Penmaenmawr mountain-girdle. Next to Penmaen Mawr is the little rounded hill of Dinas; then comes a break, through which the Llanfair stream descends, then the pretty hill of Carreg Fawr. Then comes a more considerable break, which is filled up by the rounded outlines of Y Foel Dduarth and Y Foel Ganol, with the huge bulk of Llwydmor standing grandly over them. After the break comes a long line of green hills, stretching to the little wooded height of Maes-y-Gaer, which stands over Aber.

3. *Aber* is $2\frac{1}{2}$ m. beyond Llanfairfechan, on the Bangor road. It is about half a mile from the Straits, which are here at their broadest, and at low tide uncover a vast area called the *Lavan Sands*. Across these sands, in times when there were no Menai bridges, travellers, who had already braved the terrors of the Penmaen Mawr cliff-road, had to complete their journey to Beaumaris and Holyhead. Most of the passage could be made at low water over the firm sands, the last half mile or so being accomplished by a ferry. The walk was dangerous in foggy weather, and a bell was rung in Aber Church for the special guidance of travellers. There is a remarkable group of traditions asserting that these sands were formerly a fertile valley, which was inundated by the sea in the 6th cent. For instance the N. projection of Y Foel Llys, called Trwyn-y-Wulfa (the "headland of weeping"), is said to have gained its name from its being the refuge of some of the inhabitants, who wept

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as they saw the waves breaking over their homes. It is possible that there is a substratum of truth underlying these stories.

Aber of course only means "mouth," the full name being Aber-gwyn-gregin, "the mouth of the white shells," a name difficult to understand. Its situation is wonderfully beautiful, at the exit of one of the most charming of Welsh valleys. But it fortunately still remains merely a hamlet, a few cottages only clustering at the entrance. In the centre, however, close behind the cottages on the riverside, is a flat-topped mound, *Y Myd*, with a tree or two on it, the site of a royal Welsh palace inhabited by the last two Llewelyns. Here the accomplished William de Braose, when a prisoner, won the favour, not only of his captor, Llewelyn the Great, but also, if the story be true, of his queen Joan, daughter of King John. After de Braose's release the intrigue was discovered by Llewelyn, who lured the knight back into his power, and promptly hanged him (in 1230). The tradition is that the unfortunate queen was told the truth by the royal bard, who tauntingly asked her :

"Tell me true, wife of Llewelyn,
What would you give to see your William ? "

The queen boldly and scornfully replied :

"Wales and England *and* Llewelyn,
All I'd give to see my William."

On this she was shown her lover's body dangling on the gibbet.

The above story is worth retelling as a typical Welsh romance. It is probable, however, that the tragedy did not occur at Aber at all, but at an unknown locality called Crokein. It is certain that Llewelyn

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hung William de Braose, but the pretext may have been trumped up to destroy a political enemy, and the queen may have been innocent.¹ What we actually know of her is favourable. Her relations with her husband seem to have been good. She often interceded for him, both with her father John and her brother Henry III., and proved a trustworthy and skilful diplomatist. When she died at Aber in 1237, she was splendidly buried on the opposite shore of Anglesey near Beaumaris. Another queen, Eleanor de Montfort, wife of the last Llewelyn, died here in childbirth, June 1282.

Six months later (November 1282) Aber palace again witnessed a remarkable scene, when Archbishop Peckham visited Llewelyn, just before his tragic death, to attempt mediation between him and Edward I. Peckham was well-intentioned, but an unwise and officious blunderer, and his mission was self-imposed, against Edward's will. Accordingly the negotiations were pathetically futile, and ended in Edward's demanding unconditional surrender. The worthless Dafydd, who had three times been traitor to his brother Llewelyn, was present at the interview, and for a moment wins our sympathy by claiming that he was only defending his inheritance from wanton attack. In June next year, after an ineffectual attempt to wield his brother's sceptre, he was himself

¹ The question is a very difficult one. Mr J. E. Lloyd, after weighing the evidence carefully, decides that she was guilty. He lays stress on the fact that the execution did not result in a war with England, or even break off friendly relations between Llewelyn and the de Braose family. Still evidence as to character is in her favour; and, supposing she was guilty, Llewelyn's conduct in restoring her to trust and honour is strangely magnanimous.

betrayed to Edward in the mountains near Aber, and the cruel death inflicted on him has turned him into a national hero.

The description of Aber is nothing more than that of the valley. The railway station and hotel are about $\frac{1}{2}$ m. from the village and reached by a turn from the main road opposite the church.

IIA. WALKS FROM LLANFAIRFECHAN.—For the main road, to Penmaenmawr and Conway in one direction, and to Bangor and Aber in the other, see last chapter. In other directions there are the climbs up or over Penmaen Mawr, and the ramble up the Llanfair glen, including the ascent of its flanking hills, Carreg Fawr and Dinas.

I. *Carreg Fawr* ("large rock" 1167).—This is the most characteristic Llanfairfechan hill, and the first point which the visitor will think of ascending. The climb can easily be made in an hour. Starting from the main cross-roads, close to the point where the Bangor road crosses the Llanfair stream, turn inland in a S.E. direction. Keep R., avoiding two turns L., and cross the Llanfair stream just short of the old church. Keep on the road for $\frac{1}{2}$ m. and then turn up L. to Bryngolen Farm, which is quite close. Here turn R. again, and a steep road ascends to an iron gate, beyond which the way to the top is obvious. The view, though somewhat limited, is good. Looking seaward, the village and the flat country below us show up well. Then comes the entrance of the Straits, with Beaumaris just opposite. The N. view is abruptly closed by Penmaen Mawr. Looking inland, we are on the edge of a somewhat desolate moorland plateau, round which the great mountains stand. Starting on the L., there are Tal-y-Fan and Y Foel Llwyd, then the gap of the Bwlch-y-Ddeufaen. Then

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come Y Drosogl (1), with Drum behind, and Y Foel Fras due S., seen just beyond the mighty shoulder of Llwydmor. Nearer in the same direction are the three rounded lesser heights of Yr Orsedd, Y Foel Ganol, and Y Foel Dduarth. Further off S.W., is Moel Wnion. The return may be down the glen which lies E. of the hill.

2. *The Llanfair Glen*.—It does not matter which side of the glen be taken, since there is a road on both sides and several bridges. By a continuous ascent we reach the *Fairy Glen* (admission 3d.), by no means equal to its namesake at Dwygyfylchi, but pleasant and shady, with seats and winding paths. At the upper end is the *Ford of the Three Streams*, where the three rivulets which form the Llanfair stream unite. Dinas is now L. and Carreg Fawr R. By tracing up the most westerly of the rivulets we reach the Llanfairfechan reservoir. Turning R. we may now easily climb Carreg Fawr and descend by Bryngolen Farm.

3. *Dinas* (rather over 1000 ft.).—Start from the cross-roads, and continue up the glen with the stream on the R. In about $\frac{3}{4}$ m. turn L. to the farm, Tyn-y-Llwyfan, pass through the gate, and continue about $\frac{1}{2}$ m. up the lane, then turn R. for the top. Dinas is an abrupt little conical hill, with traces of an ancient earthwork. The view is almost identical with that from Carreg Fawr (p. 86).

4. *Llanfairfechan to Penmaenmawr by Meini Hirion*.—Starting again from the cross-roads, first keep R. then twice L., and ascend the hill in a slanting direction (E.). Go straight across two cross-roads, and, when the road again forks, keep the upper track (L.). Presently we pass through a gate to the open hillside. We are now on the old mountain road at the back of Penmaen Mawr (p. 77). Continue E., presently passing the rounded

Moelfre (R.), to where the stone circles of Meini Hirion (p. 71) are just above the track. The descent is by the Cwm (p. 70).

5. *Ascent of Penmaen Mawr from Llanfairfechan.*—Start once more from the cross-roads in the direction of the old village, and turn L. at the first fork. When the main road goes into a park, keep R. to the farm called Henar, just under the steep slope. (On the L. is a steep track used by the quarrymen, with ladders at the worst places.) The regular path almost directly bends R., passes through a fir-wood, and then zigzags steeply upwards for a mile. At a d.p. turn L., and ascend to a comparatively flat plateau over 1000 ft. high. Here another d.p. guides us along a wall to an old cottage, beyond which a winding path leads up among rocks to the final cone. (For view and description see p. 73.)

IIB. WALKS FROM ABER.—The Aber valley is formed by the junction of two streams, which rise on different sides of Y Foel Fras, and carve deep-set valleys, separated awhile by the mass of Llwydmor, which at last unite, and form a narrow gorge for $\frac{3}{4}$ m. between the steep and well-wooded Maes-y-Gaer (N.), and the equally steep but barer Ffrith Ddu (S.), the northern end of the long slope of Moel Wnion. At the end of the gorge it opens suddenly on the hamlet of Aber and the flat country. There are three walks to be described, that up the W. branch to the Aber Falls, that up the E. branch to Llyn-an-Afon, and the Bwlch-y-Ddeufaen track, which also starts up the E. valley, but climbs out of it half way.

1. *Aber to the Aber Falls.*—(From the Bangor road this is rather a long 2 m. Starting from the station adds another $\frac{1}{2}$ m. A carriage can only be taken as far as Pont Neuadd, $1\frac{1}{4}$ m. from the station.) On entering the valley, the hanging woods of Maes-y-Gaer and the

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steep slopes of Ffrith Ddu rise close L. and R. As the gorge narrows, the stream, abundantly shaded by trees, comes close on our L., and is a pleasant companion until we reach the single arch of Pont Neuadd. Do not cross the bridge, but continue on a path with the stream (L.). The watersmeet is soon passed, a pretty scene where the trees grow thickest, but the two streams hardly rise to the level of their very effective surroundings. Directly afterwards we cross the right-hand stream by a wooden footbridge, and keeping it R., ascend the valley from which it flows. This is well-wooded at the lower end, the predominance of alders and thorn-bushes being marked, but bare in its upper parts. It extends for about a mile, and then comes to an end in sudden and remarkable fashion, being entirely enclosed by four great mountains, which rise steeply from it and form one of the most effective valley views in N. Wales. On the L. is Llwydmor Isaf, showing a precipitous front with screes, next is Bera, also precipitous with a rocky top, Bera Mawr. Then come Y Drosogl (2) and Moel Wnion, both smooth-sided. From the depressions between these mountains leap three rills to form the stream on our R. All have precipitous courses, but the other two are eclipsed by that descending between Llwydmor and Bera, which forms the celebrated *Aber Falls*, now plainly seen in front. When we approach, the stream is seen to descend several hundred ft. in a succession of leaps, but from the foot only the final leap is seen, which descends a hundred ft. and more over sheer rock. As there is usually plenty of water, the scene is one of the grandest of the kind in Wales, but there is no setting of verdure, only a few scattered ash-trees growing on the bare precipitous slopes. A path, starting on our L., leads

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past the rocks L. of the Falls and into the upland valley from which the stream (the Afon Goch) flows ; but there is a *mauvais pas* on the slippery rocks just above the Falls, where some accidents have occurred, so that non-climbers had better let the path alone. Looking backwards, the Menai Straits may be seen, beautifully framed in the entrance to the valley. To see the lesser Falls, which descend between Bera and Y Drosogl (2), cross the stream and skirt the hillside (R.) for $\frac{1}{2}$ m. They are worth seeing, though not so high as the principal falls, and containing a less volume of water.

2. *Aber to Llyn-an-Afon*.—Start up the glen as before, but cross Pont Neuadd, and take the road which ascends the valley on the L. Directly after crossing the bridge, there is a distant view of both the Falls at the head of the valley to the R. For a mile the road is good and exceedingly charming. The valley is narrower and more steep-sided than its twin valley. Both sides are thickly wooded, and the lively stream prattles along below in a series of cascades. Just where the wooded part of the valley ends, the Bwlch-y-Ddeufaen track, which so far we have been traversing, turns up sharp L. A d.p. "To the Lake" (*i.e.* Llyn-an-Afon), points out our route R., a green track leading up the valley, which passes round the foot of Y Foel Dduarth, and turns L. into the green and secluded upper valley, Nant-an-Afon. For a time the path runs high above the stream. The valley has few features except the bright charming stream. It is narrow, and deeply sunk among the mountains. On the L. the three rounded hills of Y Foel Dduarth, Y Foel Ganol, and Yr Orsedd are passed in turn, and on the R. are the tremendous slopes of Llwydmor. Presently the valley turns R., and Y Foel Fras appears at its head. A stony climb now takes us to the tarn



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Llyn-an-Afon (1630), which lies in a basin, surrounded by the three mountains Drum, Y Foel Fras, and Llywdmor. The utter seclusion of the scene, a hollow almost entirely encircled by mountains, will appeal strongly to many, but there are no precipices, and the lake cannot compare in grandeur with the wilder tarns. Y Foel Fras may now be climbed by ascending L. to the depression between it and Drum.

3. *The Bwlch-y-ddeufaen* ("Pass of the Two Stones") from Aber or Llanfairfechan to Tal-y-Cafn (10 m.)—This pass crosses the only break in the N.E. Snowdonian mountains between the Sychnant and Nant Ffrancon passes. It is however only for pedestrians, or at most a bridle track. It is also interesting as being on the lines of a Roman road, mentioned in the Itinerary of Antoninus, leading from Conovium (Caerhun) by way of Aber to Segontium (Carnarvon). Indeed the road may have been earlier still, for in more than one place cromlechs and standing stones are met with. The scenery is rather dreary, being wild without grandeur, and with no extended views.

Starting from Aber, the first two miles are up the Nant-an-Afon (see last walk). Then at a gate with d.p. we turn L. and zigzag up the steep slope between Maes-y-Gaer and Y Foel Dduarth. At a fork we turn R. and ascend more gradually. The three charmingly rounded hills on our R., Y Foel Dduarth (1350), Y Foel Ganol, and Yr Orsedd (1760), are very well worth ascending, if time allows, since they command delightful views of the upper Nant-an-Afon. If we continue along the pass, we soon reach a sort of summit level of 1290 ft. About here two old Roman milestones, both indicating the 8th mile from Conovium, but differing in date by about 80 years, were discovered, one of them in 1883. They are now in the

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British Museum. Two other Roman milestones have been discovered between Aber and Carnarvon.

Here the track from Llanfairfechan comes in. Start by the route to Carreg Fawr (p. 86), but when the open fell is reached, keep on the track a little R. of the top, and continue S.E. till it joins another track. Here turn R. and soon after L., and the main Bwlch-y-Ddeufaen track is shortly gained. We now descend slightly, and then keep level, with little view except over the dreary moorland plateau (N.) above which Penmaen Mawr rises. In about $1\frac{1}{4}$ m. we rise to the summit level (1403) between Y Dros gl (1) (R.) and Y Foel Llwyd (L.). Immediately after we sink a little to a grassy cup-shaped hollow, and pass between the two upright stones which "give the savage pass its name." First on the L. is a white truncated stone about 6 ft. high; then on the R. a loftier dark one 10 ft. high. The path now bends L., and continues high up on the E. slopes of Y Foel Llwyd and Tal-y-Fan. Deep below is the Afon Roe, and beyond it the serrated Pen-y-Castell ridge descending from Drum. A good view over the Conway valley develops as we descend. For a mile the descent is gradual, then the next $\frac{1}{2}$ m. is steeper. About here is a small cromlech just L. of the track. Presently we turn R. down a steep lane to Roe Wen, whence the road to Tal-y-Cafn (pp. 63, 65) is about due E.

III. THE CENTRAL MOUNTAINS OF THE NORTHERN GROUP.

1. *Y Foel Fras* (the "humpy mountain," 3091).—In all the views of the Snowdonian mountains from the N., as so far described, Y Foel Fras has stood in the centre, impressive from towering bulk and massiveness, but with little grace of outline. But, when viewed from the S., its long flat sky-line is hardly

distinguishable from several others of a similar character nearly as high, which stretch S. as far as Carnedd Llewelyn. The fact is that with Y Foel Fras the main ridge of the N. Snowdonian mountains suddenly lifts itself to an altitude of 3000 ft., which it steadily maintains with hardly a depression until it dips into Nant Ffrancon. In itself then Y Foel Fras, in spite of its height, will not be found a very interesting mountain. The top is only a broad and flat tableland, connecting with the almost equally lofty heights of Llwydmor to the N.W., and Yr Arryg to the S.W. To the E. the slope is steeper and more continuous, but all the heights on this side, as far as Carnedd Llewelyn, descend by an unbroken wall, so that it is difficult to distinguish one mountain from another. Also, though Y Foel Fras has a somewhat rocky top, it is without precipices.

Ascents of Y Foel Fras.—(a) *From Llanfairfechan or Aber by the Bwlch-y-Ddeufaen.* From the high point on the pass, exactly between Carreg Fawr and Yr Orsedd, diverge R. by a track which skirts the slopes of Yr Orsedd and Bryn Du, and then climbs the shoulder of Y Drosogl (1). On the shoulder, where the fence turns at a right angle, the routes from Conway and Penmaenmawr join (p. 81). Note here the fine view of Llyn-an-Afon, surrounded by Drum, Y Foel Fras, and Llwydmor. The cairn on Y Drosogl (2036) is a large and ancient one with a hollow in the centre. There is a good view into the Conway valley. The fence or wall now accompanies us to the top of Y Foel Fras. After a slight depression we ascend Drum (2528), in itself a fine mountain, but somewhat “overcrowded” by its loftier neighbours. The cairn at the top is also ancient. From it the view opens L. At our feet is

the deep-set Dulyn valley, with the Pen-y-Castell ridge (N.) and Clogwyn-yr-Eryr (S.). Another slight depression and a rather long, though not difficult, climb leads us to the top of Y Foel Fras. (b) *From Aber by the Nant-an-Afon* (see p. 90). (c) *From Aber by Llwydmor* ("large brown mountain"). Llwydmor is the square bulky mountain that stands between the two branches of the Aber valley, completely hiding Y Foel Fras from Aber, and very nearly from Llanfairfechan. It has two summits, Llwydmor Isaf (2256) and Llwydmor Uchaf (2743), lying more to the E. It consists mainly of long grass slopes, changing in the upper altitudes to stones and screes, but W. of the Isaf summit crags and precipices descend to the Aber Falls. As long as these are avoided, the ascent may be begun at any point. Perhaps the best plan is to ascend the path leading to the Aber Falls, and when the trees on the L. stop, climb L., keeping enough L. to round the crags in front, and then climb the long grassy slope to the Isaf summit. The further climb to the Uchaf summit is shorter but stonier. When reached, it is found to be one of the huge rock piles, which are characteristic of this group of mountains. A slight depression with corresponding rise now leads to the summit of Y Foel Fras.

The view is unsatisfactory, there being no decided top from which a panorama can be obtained. Northward is a splendid sea-view, from the Straits to Rhyl. The Penmaen and Orme headlands show up well, also all the N. mountains, bounded by the Conway valley (R.). To the S. and S.W. rises a group of high mountains, mostly close at hand, over which tower Carnedd Llewelyn and Carnedd Dafydd. Further off (R.) Elidyr shows a perfect cone, and still further (R.)

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the distant Rivals. To the E. are the flat country, the Straits, the whole of Anglesey, and the sea.

Descents from Y Foel Fras.—(a) *To Conway and Penmaenmawr.* Descend nearly N. by Drum and Y Drosogl (1) to the Bwlch-y-Ddeufaen. Here take R. for Conway. For Penmaenmawr strike N. across the moorland in the direction of Moelfre. (b) *To Llanfairfechan.* From the top of Y Drosogl (1) aim at Carreg Fawr and descend by it. (c) *To Aber.* The best way is down the Nant-an-Afon, starting from Llyn-an-Afon, to reach which first descend some way in the direction of Drum. Another good descent is straight down over Llwydmor. Beware of the precipices over the Aber Falls, and do not descend into the valley (L.), until they are passed.

2. *Ascent of Carnedd Llewelyn from Aber.*—This mountain is fully described in ch. ix., but its ascent from Aber is intimately bound up with the scenery of the present chapter. It passes over four big mountains, but these are so closely packed together, that they have no room to display their proportions. Take the path from Aber first to the Falls, then to the lesser Falls (p. 90), beyond which is Y Drosogl (2). The shorter way would be straight up Bera, but as it has a craggy and precipitous side, it is better to take the somewhat longer route by Y Drosogl. The name "shoulder" given to this mountain and to its namesake more to the N. indicates their character. Both are of little individuality, and serve as ascents to the loftier mountains they buttress. The present one is 2483 ft. high, but it is unnecessary to ascend its cairn. Some way up, a cart track is struck which zigzags upwards, and presently crosses the stream (L.) to Bera, and winds up its steep slope. At the top we have to pass between the two summits Bera Mawr (L.) (2750)

and Bera Bach (R.) (2500). *Bera* itself is hardly an independent mountain at all, being wedged tightly between Y Drosgl and Llwydmor, but it gains an individuality from these two remarkable summits or "crests," which are crowned with the finest of the large characteristic rock-piles. Another slight depression, and we traverse a sort of peat-moss and rise to the cairn of *Yr Arryg* (2875), another rock-pile. To the N. is the upper end of the Afon Goch valley, beyond which Llwydmor and Y Foel Fras block all further view, but S.W. there is a view down the Straits as far as Carnarvon, and a grand array of mountains, including the Rivals, Moel Eilio (1), all the Nant Ffrancon heights, with the Elidys, then the summit of Snowdon, beyond; and nearer Carnedd Dafydd, Yr Elen, Carnedd Llewelyn, and Y Foel Grach. We now walk along the side of the long rocky edge, a little below it on the R., until at last the depression leading to Y Foel Grach is reached. *Y Foel Grach* (3195) is really one of the giants of Snowdonia, but its proximity to the still higher Carnedd Llewelyn has robbed it of fame, and the tourist will probably not think of ascending to the cairn, but will circumvent it by passing to the R. or the L. After this there comes the final ascent of Carnedd Llewelyn, which, in contrast with the smooth walking hitherto, is very rough and laborious. (For description and view see Ch. IX.).

3. *Aber to Bethesda* (6 m.) *over Moel Wnion* (1902).—This is a charming and easy walk, best taken the reverse way (end of Ch. IX.). Moel Wnion, however, is part of the Aber scenery and must be described at once. It is a green smooth mountain, which rises directly from the level country on the W., and thus shuts in the group of mountains we have just been considering. Starting from Aber, go a little up the glen to a gate (R.)

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(opposite the mill-leat), from which diverge three paths. Take the middle path, which ascends the slope of Ffridd Ddu pretty rapidly. Another and broader path soon comes in R., which starts on the W. of the church, and the united paths become a broad green track. When this forks, take R. Immediately we cross another green track, turn somewhat more R., and keeping a wall L., cross first an iron fence, and then a gate in a wall. The first cairn on the hill is now well to the L., and need not be diverged to. A second cairn appears some distance in front. Our track takes us almost to it, and then vanishes at the moment when no further mistake is possible. The cairn is at the narrowest point of the ridge, and commands a lovely near view of the Straits (R.) and the Aber valley, with the Falls (L.). Beyond this point the ridge widens out into a wide grassy plateau, leading gradually to the top. The mountain prospect has now enlarged. In front are all the Nant Ffrancon mountains, from Bronllwyd to Glyder Fawr, with Moel Eilio (1), Elidyr Fawr, and Snowdon itself showing over them. This seems to be the most N. point from which Snowdon can be seen. To the N. and E. there is in view every mountain of importance N. of the Nant Ffrancon. (For continuation see reverse route.)

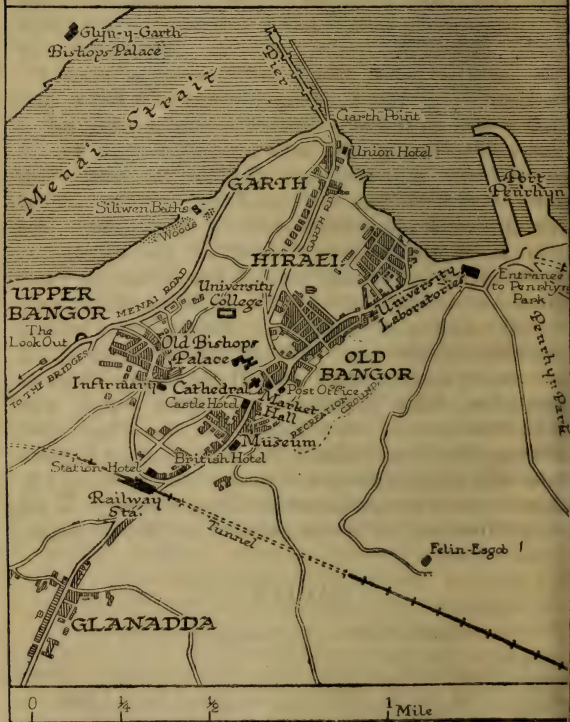
CHAPTER V

BANGOR AND THE MENAI STRAITS

[*Approaches*—Conway and Penmaenmawr (road and rail), pp. 59, 76; Bettws-y-Coed and Nant Ffrancon, p. 161; Carnarvon (road, rail, and steamer), p. 109.]

I. 1. THE meaning of the name Bangor must be left for Welsh linguists to determine. The traditional

Sketch Map of BANGOR.



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explanation is that it means "high choir," with reference to the cathedral, but Mr J. E. Lloyd and others think the meaning to be "wattled fence." The history of the city begins with the foundation of a monastery by St Deiniol about 525. Tradition adds that a little later Maelgwn (p. 21) chose Bangor as the seat of a bishopric, and Deiniol became the first bishop. Historically, however, all we can assert is that, when Wales was divided into dioceses, Bangor monastery had so far outstripped its rivals that it became the episcopal seat of Gwynedd. After this history mainly records a list of raids made by plunderers, royal and otherwise, most of whom left their mark on the cathedral. Thus we are told the cathedral was burnt in 1071, presumably by Normans. Next came Hugh Lupus, Earl of Chester, who nearly conquered all N. Wales, and built here a castle, which was destroyed in a rising of the Welsh in 1094, leaving no trace behind. Earl Hugh also got a Breton elected as Bishop of Bangor, who in 1094 had to beat a hurried retreat. Among royal ruffians King John always takes a high place. He himself got no further than Aber (1211), but sent his men forward, not only again to burn the cathedral, but to carry off the bishop as prisoner, who only regained his liberty for the strange ransom of two hundred hawks. During Henry III.'s attack on Conway (p. 49), in the course of which the cathedral was again damaged, we find Richard Bishop of Bangor was the King's ally. A still closer intimacy was formed between Edward I., when he came here as conqueror, and Bishop Anian, who baptized the infant Edward II., and obtained many privileges, including the rebuilding of the cathedral. The next foe of Bangor was her own countryman, the patriotic Owain Glyndwr, who, denounced by the

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official Welsh church, revenged himself by burning the cathedral once again in 1402. According to Shakespeare Owain Glyndwr was here again about a year later, and met the rebels Mortimer and Hotspur in the "Archdeacon's House," where the famous triple division of England and Wales was planned between them. But this meeting really took place in 1406¹ at Aberdaron in a house belonging to the Dean, whence has come the confusion. Also the third party in the Partition Treaty was not Hotspur, who had been killed at the battle of Shrewsbury, but his father Northumberland. After this Bangor had quieter times until the great Civil War, when, like all the Snowdonian towns, it was held for King Charles. However, not being fortified, it was evacuated without resistance by the Royalists on the advance of the Puritan army.

In spite of this long history, Bangor at the beginning of the 19th cent. had fewer than 2000 inhabitants. Since then its growth has been rapid. First Port Penrhyn was founded to export the slate from the recently opened Penrhyn quarries. Then, in the middle of the century, Bangor became an important railway station. Finally, in 1883, it was incorporated as a borough, and chosen as the site of the N. Wales University College. At present it is a city with over 11,000 inhabitants and shows signs of further increase.

2. The borough of Bangor, as at present constituted, consists of five parts, still more or less detached, *i.e.* Old Bangor, Upper Bangor, Glanadda, Hiracl, and

¹ Even this is uncertain, for one authority places it early in 1405, stating that the discovery of the treaty was the cause of Northumberland's flight to Scotland that year.

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Garth. Old Bangor, the original or lower town, stretches along a deep-set but streamless valley, between two steep-sided little hills about 300 ft. high, which lie in parallel lines from S.W. to N.E. The railway, in order to reach the town, tunnels in through one of these hills and out again through the other. At the railway station, looking N.E., we have the old town directly in front. At our back is the ugly suburb of Glanadda, due mainly to the railway. Taking the road R., and then turning L., we descend the principal street of the old town, quite a mile long, but narrow and ineffective, except where the cathedral appears (L.) (see later). At the end we have on the L. the seaside quarter of Hiraël. A little further a turn L. leads past the original quarters of the University College (where now there are only laboratories) to Penrhyn Port. A far better impression of the town may be got by taking the new road which starts a little L. of the station, and runs towards Garth parallel with the main street. Presently the cathedral is on our R., looking out of a bower of trees, and with the Deanery and old Bishop's Palace, now the Town Hall, still nearer to us. On the L. the grounds of University College slope steeply down, and above tower the white new buildings, placed on the finest site in the town.

3. But the real beauty of the town belongs mostly to *Upper Bangor*, which has been built quite recently on the steep hill to the L. A sloping road winds up to it from the station on the L., and it is also connected with the old town by break-neck roads and flights of steps. Here are most of the new villas and lodging-houses, and, though the buildings crowd too closely at the top, yet the effect is not unpleasing. There are two magnificent scenic assets, (a) the Menai

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Straits (W.), (b) the comprehensive view of the mountains (E.).

(a) On the W. side of the hill roads and houses look straight down on to the Straits, which have just narrowed to the lovely river-like appearance they keep nearly as far as Carnarvon. The banks are steep, well-wooded, and dotted with mostly well-placed houses, the general effect of the scene being at once rich and soft. It is difficult to say whether the view up the narrower part to the bridges, or down the wider opening between Beaumaris and Penmaen Mawr, is the most charming.

(b) The full mountain view is only to be got from a few favoured houses or gardens, the best view-point of all being the tower of the University College. But lovely sections of it are constantly fronting the visitor at the end of every street, and through the gaps between the houses. The full circle of heights extends from sea to sea, *i.e.* from the Ormes right round to the Rivals. The N. section of the Snowdonian mountains groups more finely from this point than from any other. In particular, this is the best distant view of Carnedd Llewelyn and Carnedd Dafydd, which are often disappointing, but from here show well-defined rounded summits and lines of grand precipices. After the gap of the Nant Ffrancon, with the Glyders showing behind, Carnedd y Filiast and Elidyr Fawr tower up grandly close at hand, with a not very effective view of Snowdon, looking just over the R. shoulder of Elidyr. Of the mountains further S. Moel Eilio (1) shows up the best.

From the upper town two roads, each about a mile long, lead down the hill to Garth. That to the R. passes the University College, and has most of the mountains in view the whole way. That to the

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L. keeps close to the Straits, passing through the Siliwen hanging woods, with the public bathing-place below.

4. At *Garth* the attractions of Bangor culminate. Here the promontory, on which the city is built, runs N. into the Straits at an acute angle. On the narrow spit of land are a hotel, some lodging-houses, and a pleasant little public garden. Beyond stretches the *pier*, which has been built two-thirds of the whole distance across the straits, thus forming at high water one of the most delightful promenades conceivable. On one side is the narrow part of the Straits, with the Suspension Bridge in view; on the other the broad entrance between Beaumaris and Penmaen Mawr, with the two Ormes and Llandudno in the background. More to the R. is the stretch of the Lavan Sands, beyond which are the woods of Penrhyn Park, and in the background the best view of the mountains of North Snowdonia. Still further R. is the opening of Nant Ffrancon with the Glyders behind. Then come Carnedd y Filiast and Elidyr Fawr, after which the slope of Bangor hill cuts off the view. The whole scene is hardly to be equalled, even in N. Wales. Between the pier and the far shore is the *Clio*, a corvette, which looks qualified to act as part of Nelson's fleet. However, she was built as late as 1860, a date which will serve to remind us how recently this type of ship has disappeared. When she became obsolete, the Admiralty made her over to a committee, who anchored her in her present position and turned her into an industrial school, where two hundred boys are taught. The fee for a visit is one shilling, and a boat will always be sent if signalled for from the pier-head.

5. *The Public Recreation Grounds* are on the steep-sided hill S.E. of the old town, and are pleasantly

laid out with walks and seats among the rocks and heather. The view is mostly over Bangor itself and the Straits. A substantial high wall encircles the grounds, and cuts off the E. view of the mountains, except from one or two favoured points right at the S. end.

6. Bangor is pre-eminently a city of institutions, two of which must be referred to at some length.

(1) *The Cathedral* is not larger than many parish churches, and suffers both from its low site, and horizontal outline. As we have already seen, it was burnt down at least three times ; and any work before the latter part of the 15th cent. exists only in fragments. Of the Norman building, destroyed in the attacks of 1211 and 1245, there remains one block of masonry S.W. of the choir, showing outside a flat Norman buttress and a blocked round-headed window. Of Bishop Anian's restoration in the Geometrical period, a few fragments were discovered when the Cathedral was restored in 1869, from which Sir Gilbert Scott reconstructed the present central pier and shallow transepts. But it may reasonably be doubted whether his work bears any real resemblance to Anian's cathedral. The Geometrical windows in the S. aisle of the nave, and the S. door, though later in style than the restored transepts, were probably also built by Anian, who lived till 1305. The windows in the N. aisle have now been assimilated to those in the S. In 1402 came Owain Glyndwr's raid, in which nearly all Anian's work perished. The cathedral lay in ruins until 1496, when Bishop Dene rebuilt the E. part of the choir, including the two large Perpendicular windows, one facing E. the other S. The nave arcades and clerestory were rebuilt in late Tudor style by Bishop Skevynton in 1532 (see inscription over W.

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door). At the W. end of the choir there are clerestory windows of the same pattern. The low and heavy W. tower was built at the same date. The final epoch in the cathedral history is Sir G. Scott's restoration, already referred to. At the W. end of S. aisle is the Decorated font; at the W. end of the N. aisle are several fragments of monuments, and an old pair of tongs for removing dogs. At the end of the S. transept there is a tomb under an arched niche, with an inscription stating that this is traditionally the tomb of Owain Gwynedd (*v. p. 24*). The arch itself is obviously later in style, but might have been built in honour of the tomb. Its identification however is uncertain, though it is known that Owain Gwynedd himself, his brother Cadwaladr, and his father Gruffydd-ap-Cynan were buried in the cathedral. Two old tombs in the choir are assigned to Bishop Anian (the second of the name d. 1328) and to a member of the Tudor family. In the library is the very interesting Pontifical (or Service Book) of Bishop Anian.

2. *University College of N. Wales*.—When in 1883 Bangor was chosen as the site of this institution, the Penrhyn Arms Hotel, near the harbour, was the first building selected. This now contains the laboratories only, while the new institution has a fine white pile of new buildings, on the most commanding site in the city. Most of the buildings stand round a quadrangle. The largest room is the great hall, the gift of Sir John Pritchard Jones, and the library is also a fine room. The tower is the best view-point in Bangor.

Near the College are several other educational institutions, and others are scattered about in different parts of the town. With its fine situation, and so many handsome buildings, Bangor may develop into a very beautiful city. But watchful care on the part

of the authorities is required, to secure further open spaces for the public, and prevent the building of mean houses on conspicuous sites. Even now there are eyesores, which make one fear for the city's future. The inevitable slate roofs also partly mar the effect.

II. 1. *Penrhyn Castle*, the grounds of which cover a circuit of 7 m. E. of Bangor, is a famous ancient seat. Its chief hero is Sir Piers Gruffydd, who lived here in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, and was the most remarkable "sea-dog" whom Wales produced. At the Armada he equipped a ship at his own expense, and took a gallant part in the fighting. Half a century later Archbishop Williams (p. 53) possessed the manor. It is now the seat of Lord Penrhyn, whose family have held it for over a century.

(*Entrance to the Castle is permitted on Tuesdays and, if the family are away, on Thursdays too, between 10 and 5. Charge, 2s. for one and 1s. extra for every additional person.*) The nearest gate leading to the Castle is close to Port Penrhyn. Why so high a fee should be charged is not clear, for there is really nothing to see. The castle looks well from a distance, but a nearer inspection shows it to be a modern building of sham Norman. The keep is modelled on that of Rochester Castle. Inside may be seen the Hirlas horn (a famous drinking cup), and a bedstead of slate. The park with its fine woods is splendid, and the situation is of course unrivalled.

Just outside the S. gate is the model village of *Llandegai*. The church contains two monuments worth seeing, one to Archbishop Williams, who died at Gloddaeth (see p. 46), the other by Westmacott to the first Lord and Lady Penrhyn. In 1648 during the second Civil War a Royalist army under Sir John

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Owen (pp. 29, 53) was completely defeated near here, and Sir John himself taken prisoner.

2. *The Menai Bridges* (Suspension Bridge, 2 m., Tubular Bridge, 3 m.).—The Suspension bridge is on the main Holyhead road. After descending the Nant Ffrancon, this road keeps Penrhyn Park on the R., and then at Port Penrhyn turns sharp to the L., and traverses for a mile the main street of old Bangor. Then it turns again sharp R., and passing the railway station, climbs the hill to Upper Bangor. At the top it sweeps round L. by two turns, and then begins to descend. Near the top on the R. is the *Look-out*, a railed-in platform with good views over the Straits. After about another mile the road turns R. again over the *Suspension Bridge* (toll 1d., bicycles 2d.). Until this was built in 1826 by Telford, the ferries had been the only way of crossing into Anglesey. The principle applied was then a novel one, *i.e.* to pass huge chains, securely fastened at the ends, firmly over tall piers, and to suspend the roadway from them. The road between the piers is 579 ft. long and exactly 100 ft. above high water mark. The cost was £120,000, but over £25,000 had also to be spent in buying up the old ferry rights. With the opening of the bridge the triumph of the coach over the ferry was assured, yet only 24 years had to pass, before the district saw a far more conspicuous triumph, that of the railway over the coach. In 1850 the *Britannia Tubular Bridge* was opened, one mile further up the Straits, for the passage of the Chester to Holyhead railway. The engineer, Robert Stephenson, again applied a novel principle, that of passing square tubes of rigid steel through the solid piers on which they were to rest. The principle had already been tested in the tubular bridge over the Conway (p. 54), which had been opened

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two years before. The bridge rests on three piers, the middle one of which is built on the Britannia rock in the centre of the waterway, whence the name of the bridge. The railway has a total length of 1841 ft. over the bridge ; and is 100 ft. above high water mark. The cost was £622,000. On each side there is a pair of carved lions.

The suspension bridge is light and graceful, an ornament to every view into which it comes. The tubular bridge is not beautiful, but has a kind of massive dignity. Most tourists will be content with the view of it obtained from the suspension bridge. The charming walk along the suspension bridge should be taken by all, since the beauties of the Straits, the steep wooded banks and the ever-flowing current, are better seen from here than from any other point. (If a nearer view of the tubular bridge is wanted, it is best got from the Anglesey side near the Anglesey column.)

After crossing the bridge it is worth while to take a lane (L.), which leads over a causeway to the little island on which stands the tiny church of *Llantysilio*. The date of its foundation is given as 630, but the claim that any of its masonry or timber is of that date may be dismissed at once. It has three small windows, possibly 14th cent., and a lichen-covered bell-turret. The whole island is crowded with gravestones, some of which are too elaborate for the simple character of the scene. The rocky top is worth ascending for its view of the Straits and the bridges. The road on the far side of the Straits, between the Anglesey column and Beaumaris, is famous for its grand mountain views, with the Straits as a foreground. From the column itself is obtained perhaps the best panoramic view of Snowdonia.

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3. *Bangor to Llanfairfechan* (8 m.), *Penmaenmawr* (10 m.), and *Conway* (14 m.), see reverse route, p. 76.

4. *Bangor to Bethesda and the Nant Ffrancon* (see Ch. IX.).

5. *Bangor to Carnarvon* (9 m.): (a) *By road*.—There are two main roads to Carnarvon, which meet in $3\frac{1}{2}$ m. One starts near the station and runs S.W. through Glanadda. It is a good road, but lies in a narrow valley between two ridges of low hills, and so gives no view. The other road starts by the Holyhead road to the Menai suspension bridge, but just before reaching it, turns L. over the railway. For the next 2 m. the view R. is barred by the high walls of Treborth and Vaynol Parks, but (L.) there is a fine view of the mountains. After the two roads meet, there is nothing to see till *Dinorwic Port* is reached ($4\frac{1}{2}$ m. from Bangor), a rather large village, where the slate from the Llanberis quarries is shipped. After this road and railway run parallel by the side of the Straits, which are full in view to the R., until Carnarvon is reached.

(b) *By railway*.—The railway keeps near the road the whole way. The views of the Straits (R.) are the principal feature.

(c) *By steamer*.—This is by far the best way to make the excursion. It is a voyage of one hour through the best part of the Straits. The steamers start from Llandudno, and proceed by Beaumaris and Bangor to Carnarvon. The official time-tables should be consulted. The start from Bangor is from the end of Garth Pier. Directly after starting, the beautiful wooded banks shut out the mountain view (L.), which is only gained intermittently for some miles. On the L. is a fine view of Upper Bangor, with the University buildings well placed. On the R. there are several

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well-built houses, one of which is the new Bishop's Palace. In front is the graceful suspension bridge. As we rapidly near it, we have the new village of Menai Bridge (R.), with some small islands in front. Directly we have passed the bridge, there are on the L. the lovely hanging woods of Treborth. On the R. there are first the island of Llantysilio with its ancient church, then green meadows, and lastly, close to the Tubular bridge, another island with two white cottages hardly above high water mark. Between the two bridges lies a dangerous whirlpool called the Swellies. After passing the Tubular bridge, there are on the R. Llanfair mansion and church, with a statue of Nelson in front, and the Anglesey column behind. To the L. are some glimpses of the mountain view, until they are shut out again by the thick-growing trees. We now traverse the narrowest and most beautiful part of the Straits, between the well-wooded estates of Plas Newydd (R.) and Vaynol Park (L.), an old Tudor mansion which is not shown. In front is a beautiful distant view of the Rivals. At the end of the reach we come to Port Dinorwic (p. 15). Here is a celebrated ancient ferry, stretching to *Moel-y-don* on the Anglesey shore. Several antiquaries have thought that at this point the Roman conquerors, Suetonius Paullinus and Agricola, may have invaded Anglesey, then the headquarters of the Druid worship. The historian Tacitus, however, gives no assistance in fixing the locality, and the ferry in question is just as likely to have been the one between Aber and Beaumaris. Some writers also locate here the disaster which befell Edward I. on November 6th, 1282, though our authorities only say it was "near Bangor." After seizing Anglesey with his fleet, the king had thrown a bridge of boats across the Straits to attack the mainland. Some English

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troops, when attempting to cross, got separated from the main body, and cut off by the Welsh, a success which throws a transient gleam on the end of the last Llewelyn's reign.

After this the Straits become wider, and the bank on the R. is much flatter and less interesting. On the L. bank the trees continue beyond Port Dinorwic, then they disappear for the time, and there is a beautiful and comprehensive view of the mountain range. As Carnarvon is reached, Snowdon is seen to retire behind Moel Eilio. The castle is now prominent in front and we run alongside of Carnarvon quay (see Ch. X.).

CHAPTER VI

LLANRWST AND TREFRIW

[*Approaches*—Llandudno and Conway (by rail, road, or steamer), p. 62.]

I. 1. THE little town of Llanrwst lies in the heart of the Conway valley, about 12 m. above Conway itself, and on the E. bank of the river, just above the point where it becomes tidal. The surrounding valley, though far from showing the rich beauty of Bettws-y-Coed, 4 m. higher up, is nevertheless highly attractive. The level valley floor is of a rich green, with the stream of the Conway wandering sinuously through it. To the W. is a line of wooded hills, so steep as almost to be precipitous, which, keeping a general level of about 800 ft., stretch continuously for 6 or 7 m. from Porthllwyd right to Bettws-y-Coed. Their sides are entirely clothed with luxuriant woods, with a rocky ridge or bare summit occasionally rising above them.

Beautiful as it is, this line of hills entirely cuts off the upper part of the Conway valley from any view of the great mountains to the W. *Llanrwst* stands nearly opposite the centre of this cliff-line, and nearer the hills on the E. side of the valley, which are less steep, and show pleasant cultivated slopes.

The town which is built in this pleasant country is of high antiquity, for we hear of a battle here in 954, in which the invading army of S. Wales was defeated by the levies of Gwynedd; but otherwise it has little connection with Welsh history, except that it did not escape ravage in the wars of Owain Glyndwr and of the Roses. The town used once to be famous for its Welsh harps, and later as a wool market. The market is still important. Indeed, the place strikes a visitor as a serious little Welsh town, much occupied in its own concerns, and considering the scenery, and apparently the tourists as well, somewhat of an irrelevance. There is hardly a well-built house in the town, yet somehow the effect is quaint and not unpleasing, especially in the market-place, which has old public buildings in its centre. There are only two buildings worth notice, the bridge and the church.

The Old Bridge, S. of the town, bears the date 1636. It is of three arches, the middle one being higher and longer than the others. In the centre there is a Prince of Wales' feather, and the ruins of an old sundial. The bridge is said to have been designed by Inigo Jones, but this is doubtful.

The Church, dedicated to St Grwst, dates from the 15th cent., but there is nothing old about it except the magnificent screen and rood-loft of black oak showing lovely tabernacle work, said to have been brought from Maenan Abbey (p. 63) at the dissolution. S. of the chancel is the interesting *Gwydir chapel*, which

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is entered by a separate door. An inscription states it was erected in 1633 by Sir Richard Wynne of Gwydir from a design of Inigo Jones, as the burial-place of the Gwydir family. It contains beautiful wood-work, and is full of interesting monuments, a description of which is given on a card hung up in the chapel. On the floor is the large stone coffin of Llewelyn the Great, who died in 1240 after a reign of 46 years. He was buried at Aberconwy Abbey, whence his coffin was transferred to Maenan Abbey, and brought here at the dissolution. His ashes have long been scattered, and we cannot even call him in the words of his bard :

Lord of naught but the piled-up stones of his tomb,
Of the seven-foot grave in which he lies.

Another interesting tomb on the floor is the armed effigy of Hywel Coetmore, apparently great grandson of Dafydd, brother of Prince Llewelyn ap Gruffydd. He is said to have led a hundred men of Denbigh to the field of Poitiers. His family owned Gwydir (see next paragraph), and sold it to the Wynnes in the 16th cent. The other monuments are to the Wynne family. There is a conspicuous pedigree in white marble, stretching from Prince Owain Gwynedd to Sir Richard Wynne himself. S. of the chapel are two pyramidal columns of marble, set up by Sir Richard to the memory of two illustrious ancestors, Meredydd, who owned Dolwyddelan Castle, and his grandson, the still more celebrated Sir John Wynne. Between them is a tablet to John Wynne ap Meredydd, d. 1559, founder of Gwydir Castle. Among other monuments are six well-executed effigies engraved on brass, of which the best is to Sarah, wife of Sir Richard, d. 1671. Note also a curious marble tomb to a baby ; Sydney Wynne, d. 1639. On the E. wall of the

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churchyard is a curious piece of stone carving, showing a lamb with flag. Just outside are almshouses founded by Sir John Wynne in 1610.

2. *Gwydir Castle* ($\frac{1}{2}$ m. from Llanrwst).—Cross the bridge and proceed $\frac{1}{2}$ m. W. to the junction with the Bettws-y-Coed and Trefriw road. The castle with its grounds lies in the angle of the two roads. It was long associated with the Wynne family. The first of the Wynnes to settle in the neighbourhood was Meredydd. After his death in 1525 his eldest son John Wynne bought Gwydir from the Coetmore family, and built or rebuilt the Castle in 1555. The principal doorway shows his initials I.W. and a coat of arms. His son, Sir John Wynne, built a second smaller house above in the woods, of which the quaint chapel added in 1673 remains, where service is still sometimes held. Sir John was in many ways a remarkable man, an M.P. for Carnarvon, and Sheriff both for Carnarvonshire and Merionethshire. He was a careful landlord, with an eye to the development of the country and the improvement of his neighbours' condition, and also a keen antiquary, who has written a valuable history of his own family. It is scarcely creditable to the Welsh that, while they have often made heroes of robber chiefs, they should have condemned Sir John Wynne to expiate his supposed tyrannies in a sort of purgatory under the Swallow Falls (p. 138). There are indications, however, that he was at times a hard and even oppressive landlord, and this has been remembered against him. At his death in 1626 his son, Sir Richard Wynne (founder of the Gwydir Chapel), was Groom of the Bedchamber to Charles I., and afterwards became Treasurer to Queen Henrietta. The estate has since changed owners more than once. It passed from the Wynnes to the Dukes of Ancaster, and is

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now a seat of Lord Carrington. It has been visited by Queen Elizabeth, the Earl of Leicester, and Charles I.

(*The Castle is shown on Tuesdays and Fridays before 5 p.m., but, in the absence of the family, visitors are often admitted on other days.*) Of the original Elizabethan house very little remains, the principal part being a sort of projecting buttress on the E. side, with small traceried windows. The rest was rebuilt in 1816. Five rooms are usually shown. Among the portraits notice one of Mary Wynne by Lely, another doubtfully ascribed to Lely, and one of the Duchess of Ancaster by Sir Joshua Reynolds; also portraits of Sir John Wynne and Prince Rupert. In the *hall* there is a well-executed hunting-scene, carved in high relief. The work is said to be Belgian. Also some good plaster carvings similar to those in Plâs Mawr in Conway. The *morning room* has a fine carved overmantel, and walls covered with Spanish leather. It contains a spinet 200 years old. The *dining-room* has a carved oak doorway with twisted pillars, the work of local talent. The fireplace has flanking oak pillars and another beautiful overmantel. The *drawing-room* is hung with old tapestries, and contains several chairs associated with royalty, *i.e.*, the Coronation Chair of George II., a chair of Peter the Great, and a footstool, the work of Queen Caroline. There is also the cradle of Sir Richard Wynne, and a wool-work screen, said to be the work of Mary Queen of Scots. The *state bedroom* contains the bed where Charles I. slept. The *garden* shows on the S. side, some large cedars, on the E., a yew-tree 500 years old, and on the N., a Dutch garden with two rows of "bee-hive" yew-trees 300 years old, and a fountain in the centre. Behind the grounds the splendid hanging woods rise upward into

the striking bluff of *Carreg-y-Gwalch* ("crag of the falcon"). Near the summit tradition has placed a celebrated robber cave, which has now either fallen in or been filled up. Here, about the troubled times of the Wars of the Roses, Dafydd ap Shenkin, a famous outlaw, commanding a band of robbers clad in green, terrorized the Conway valley; at the same time that another famous robber, Hywel ap Gethin, ruled the Lledr valley from Dolwyddelan Castle. But in 1468 the Yorkist leaders, the Earl of Pembroke and his brother Sir Richard Herbert, marching against Harlech Castle, systematically and ruthlessly harried the whole neighbourhood, and made an end of robbers and honest men alike.

3. *Trefriw* is about a mile lower down the valley than Llanrwst, and on the W. side. To reach it (1½ m.) leave Llanrwst by the N., turn L. just before the station, and cross the Conway by the new bridge (toll 1d.). A straight road a mile long now runs to Trefriw, which is beautifully situated at the mouth of the lateral valley of Crafnant. On the S. the fine bluff of Clunllom, wooded to the top, rises for 900 ft. Facing it on the N., is the end of the ridge called Careadwydd, equally steep and lofty, but not so thickly wooded. Between these lies the pretty valley, which a little way up makes a fascinating curve. From a distance, either when seen from above or from the Conway valley, the place looks charming, but it is disappointing when entered, since the houses are as a rule not well built, and the general aspect ineffective. There is nothing to see. The so-called "Fairy Falls" are insignificant; and the church is only remarkable for the story of its foundation. Originally Trefriw was part of the parish of Llanrhychwyn, an old church among the hills to which we shall

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shortly make our way (p. 118), but on Joan, queen of Llewelyn the Great, complaining of the walk up hill, Trefriw church was built for her convenience. It now shows no sign of its ancient origin. The principal hotel, the Belle Vue, is about $\frac{1}{3}$ m. N. of the town, close to the point where the Conway begins to be tidal, and to which steamers come from Conway in the summer. Another mile further N. are the *Trefriw Wells*, where a pleasant-looking pump-room with baths has been erected. The water descends from a disused mine on the hill, supposed by some to be even of Roman origin. The water is described as chalybeate, but it is made nastier than usual by the addition of a flavour of sulphur.

II. *The walks and rambles from Trefriw and Llanrwst* start either from Trefriw itself or from near Gwydir Castle. It will save repetition, if it be remembered that starting from Llanrwst involves an extra $1\frac{1}{2}$ m. in the first case and $\frac{1}{2}$ m. in the second. Also that Gwydir Castle itself is $1\frac{1}{2}$ m. from Trefriw.

I. *Llanrwst to Capel Curig direct* (7 m.).—Of this route 4 m. are over a mountain cart-track. From the junction of roads near Gwydir Castle turn W. for a few yards, and follow a mountain road which diverges L., with the d.p. "Capel Curig, $6\frac{1}{2}$ m." In a few hundred yards, just after passing a forester's cottage, go straight on, avoiding a path on the R. leading to Llanrhychwyn, and, a little further, avoid a track diverging L. to Llyn-y-Parc. The path lies through the thick woods for about $1\frac{1}{2}$ m., then passes some disused lead-mines, and climbs to the summit-ridge, about 900 ft. high. Here a fine mountain view bursts upon us. Moel Siabod is close at hand, with the peak of Snowdon peering over its right shoulder. Further R. are the Glyders and the three-peaked Tryfaen. The

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road soon passes another lead mine, and goes straight on, avoiding a turn R. to Llyn Geirionydd, and another L. through a gate to Bettws-y-Coed. Llyn T'yn-y-Mynydd (R.) is of no interest. We now again meet with woods and descend rapidly to Ty Hyll bridge on the Llugwy, $2\frac{1}{2}$ m. from Capel Curig (p. 139).

2. *Gwydir Castle to Llyn-y-Parc and on to Bettws-y-Coed* (about $4\frac{1}{2}$ m.).—This is a delightful ramble. Start as in the last paragraph, and, when past the forester's cottage take the first turn L. by a track leading S. beside a wall. (For other details see description the reverse way p. 140.)

3. *Llanrhydwyn Church* lies on the plateau $1\frac{1}{2}$ m. S. of Trefriw and on ground about 700 ft. high. It is a favourite excursion, and can be reached either from Gwydir Castle or from Trefriw. The following account starts from Gwydir Castle, returning to Trefriw (about 4 m.). Start as in the last two paragraphs, and, after passing the forester's cottage, turn at once R. A brook is crossed, which forms (R.) a pleasing miniature cascade or water-slide known as the "Grey Mare's Tail." The road descends a little, and then is for a while level. Presently avoid a turn R. to a cottage, and ascend L. a lane leading up through the wood. In about $\frac{1}{2}$ m. leave the lane by a stile L., and cross a marshy field till another path is joined. Turn L. and we are close to the farm where the keys of the church are kept. The little church is just above. It is usually called *Llewelyn's old church*, where Llewelyn the Great used to worship, until his queen persuaded him to build her a church at Trefriw. The churchyard is entered by a lych-gate with the date 1462, and is shaded by a fine group of old yews. The church consists of two aisles of equal size, 40 ft. long, with a row of plain square pillars between them, and has a



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gable bell-tower at the N.W. end. Its thick walls, rough roof-timbers, and extreme plainness show it is of great age. It has been called pre-Norman, but the masonry is certainly not earlier than Norman (see p. 32), though the rude and tub-shaped font might possibly be so. At the E. end of one aisle is a double foliated lancet, containing some old glass representing the Trinity. On the other pane there seems to be a headless Virgin and Child. Other windows have a little old glass. The pulpit is of good oak dated 1691. The church has a very quaint effect, since it lies among irregular hills with hardly a house near it.

For Trefriw return to the farm below the church, and take the path leading N. In about $\frac{1}{4}$ m. this is joined (L.) by a cart track, which leads us all the way back to Trefriw, descending by the N.E. slopes of Clunllom. The hill itself (938 ft.) may easily be included by slightly varying the route. At the point where the path runs into the cart track turn L. A little way past some cottages a path strikes off R., in the direction of Trefriw, keeping above the cart track, and rejoining it $\frac{1}{2}$ m. further on. From the highest point of this path it is only a climb of about 250 ft. (L.) to the bare top of *Clunllom*. Trefriw itself is hidden by the trees, but Crafnant is well seen. The Conway valley with Llanrwst appears to great advantage. The nearer hills shut off most of the view, but Moel Siabod and Snowdon appear S.W. and Arenig S. The cart track leads to the S.W. end of Trefriw.

The reverse way from Trefriw to Gwydir Castle is equally pleasant. A visit to the church may also be made part of a ramble including Llyn Geirionydd (see next paragraph). Those who have reached the church from Gwydir or Trefriw, and wish to include

the lake, should turn L. on leaving the church. Cross a stepstile into a lane, go R. for about 100 yds., then turn L. again by a good track, which bends round the slope of the hill, and reaches the lake in about 1 m.

To reach the church from Llyn Geirionydd, take the plain track which leads from the foot of the lake in a N.E. direction. When in a few yds. it forks, take the R.-hand path, which bends up round the hill to the church.

4. *Llyn Geirionydd*.—There are three interesting lakes lying in basins on the plateau stretching W. and S.W. of Trefriw, which can be conveniently visited both from Trefriw and from Capel Curig. The best plan to see each of these lakes is to ramble the whole way from Trefriw to Capel Curig or *vice versa*, passing the lake in question. Of these rambles the one passing Llyn Crafnant is by far the finest. Llyn Cowlyd is best explored from Capel Curig, and Llyn Geirionydd from Trefriw ($2\frac{1}{2}$ m.). Start by path on N. side of Crafnant, as in next ramble, but in rather more than $\frac{1}{2}$ m. diverge L., cross the Crafnant stream, and make for the depression between Clunllom (L.) and Mynydd Daulyn (R.), whence the stream from Llyn Geirionydd may be seen leaping down to join the Crafnant brook. At the foot of the lake is the so-called *Bedd Taliesin*, or Taliesin's grave. A monument has been set up on the spot, but with no inscription. It is, however, more probable that the real Bedd Taliesin is near Taliesin village between Machynlleth and Aberystwyth. Taliesin, the most famous of Welsh bards, traditionally lived in the 6th cent. in the times of Prince Maelgwn. When an infant he is said to have been exposed by his mother in a coracle, and to have been rescued from the estuary of the Dovey by a local prince.

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Llyn Geirionydd is a fine sheet of water $\frac{3}{4}$ m. long and $\frac{1}{4}$ m. broad. To prevent disappointment it should be the first of the three lakes to be seen, since it has neither the beauty of *Llyn Crafnant*, nor the wild grandeur of *Llyn Cowlyd*. It looks best when backed by the precipices of *Mynydd Daulyn*. On the other sides the hills are bare and uninteresting slopes.

The walk may be continued in several ways. From the foot we can either (1) return to Trefriw by taking the *détour* by *Llanrhychwyn*, (2) scramble without a path round the slopes of *Mynydd Daulyn* in the direction of *Llyn Crafnant*. This involves some rough walking, until a quarry is reached, from which a path leads over into the *Crafnant* track. Or we may take the path by the E. bank to the head of the lake, where there are three routes to choose between. (1) Turn R. and cross by a foot track directly over the ridge of *Mynydd Daulyn*, here about 900 ft. high, and down to *Llyn Crafnant*. This is the best course for those who wish to see both lakes on the same day. (2) Keep straight on in a general S. direction slightly inclined to W., cross the moorland with little or no path, leaving the lakelet *Llyn Bychan* on the R., and the somewhat larger *Llyn Goddion Duon* on the L., and descend to the *Llugwy* valley, 2 m. short of *Capel Curig*. (3) Take the mountain road L. which leads to *Bettws-y-Coed* and *Capel Curig* (see accounts reverse way, pp. 146, 149).

5. *Llyn Crafnant*.—This charming lake should be seen by all visitors to Trefriw, *Capel Curig*, and *Bettws-y-Coed*. On reaching Trefriw from *Llanrwst*, turn R., but immediately turn L. again into a road, which at once climbs a steep slope. Presently the road forks, and a d.p. directs us L. (R. to *Llyn Cowlyd*). The road is now plain, up the N. side of the pretty valley.

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The stream on our L. is pleasing, and the surrounding hills are fine. On our R. is the long ridge of Cefn Careadwydd, which, starting from the Conway valley with a height of about 1300 ft., stretches S.W. without a break, till it rises into the Creigiau Gleision (2000 ft.), overhanging Llyn Cowlyd. The top of the ridge is bare, but the slopes pleasantly wooded. On the L. is the lower but beautifully wooded bluff of Clunllom (938) and straight in front the rocky Mynydd Daulyn (1312). About 2 m. from Trefriw the road crosses the stream, goes close under the rocks of Mynydd Daulyn, and in another $\frac{1}{2}$ m. passes a remarkably narrow opening for a few yards, beyond which Llyn Crafnant at once appears with fine effect. At the foot there is a monument, recording the gift of the lake to Trefriw by Richard James in 1896.

Llyn Crafnant is a little more than $\frac{3}{4}$ m. long and about $\frac{1}{3}$ m. broad, somewhat larger than Llyn Geirionydd. It lies in a decided basin, 603 ft. above sea level. The sides are still formed by Cefn Careadwydd (R.) and Mynydd Daulyn (L.), which descend to the lake in smooth steep slopes. As we proceed along the road on the E. side, the well-wooded hills at the head of the lake arrange themselves in the form of a beautiful amphitheatre, above which rise several jagged peaks, the two principal being Craig Wen (R., about 1750), and Clogwyn Mawr (L., about 1500). A little after passing a farm called Cynllwyd (R., close to the lake), a path may be taken L., which leads over the slope of Mynydd Daulyn to the head of Llyn Geirionydd. But the preferable continuation of the ramble is to walk on to Capel Curig (6 m. from Trefriw). The head of the valley has to be left by the L.-hand corner, with Clogwyn Mawr on the R. The simplest way of doing this is to follow the road beyond the lake up to the highest

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farm Blaen-y-Nant. Here a path strikes off L. which climbs the pass steadily. Moel Siabod now comes into view in front. We descend a shallow hollow with the cliffs of Clogwyn Mawr close on the R. At the bottom there is apparently the bed of an old tarn, which the path skirts to the L. Then it ascends and descends a little, crosses a stream and some moorland, and goes back again to the cliffs of Clogwyn Mawr, round which it skirts to the R., finally turning due W. and descending to Capel Curig.

6. *Llyn Cowlyd*.—The way is over Cefn Careadwydd. The ramble is dreary and wild, and traverses high ground. Start as for Crafnant, but at a d.p. turn R. The cart track zigzags to the top, but a short cut may soon be taken L., which passes a farm, and then climbs steeply to the summit ridge (1407), whence there is a fine mountain view. The descent into the far valley soon begins. (The valley and lake are described on p. 150.)

7. *Dolgarog* ("meadow of the brook") and *Porthllwyd* ("brown harbour") *Waterfalls*.—These are formed by the Afon Ddu and the Afon Porthllwyd respectively, the streams from Llyn Cowlyd and Llyn Eigiau, which, after traversing dreary upland valleys, tumble in cascades over the steep wooded bluffs guarding the W. side of the Conway valley. The ravines formed by the tumultuous course of these streams are of so high an order of beauty, that it is a pity that they are not more accessible. If for instance the Trefriw authorities, who have shown a commendable public spirit in improving the paths in their neighbourhood, were to extend their energies a little, and cut a series of good paths up both the ravines, they would add much to the attractions of their neighbourhood.¹

¹ This was written in 1914, but it seems already too late for such a suggestion. The "British Aluminium

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Starting from Trefriw by the Conway road, we reach a bridge over the *Dolgarog stream*, about $\frac{3}{4}$ m. after passing the Trefriw Wells. Take the path which starts immediately N. of the bridge, but, after ascending a little way, look out for a track L. (*N.B.*—no gate or stile), which leads to what may be called the lower falls, a fine water slide over a smooth shelf of rock, set perhaps at an angle of 45° . From here follow a rough and scrambling track leading up the glen, and you will soon hear the thunder of the principal fall. When this comes into view, either continue to climb till you gain a rock right opposite to it, or descend a steep bank, from which it can be viewed from below. The fall is a sheer unbroken leap of more than 100 ft. In volume of water it is quite equal to the Aber Fall, but in its rich setting of woodland it is far superior.

Returning to the road, we go N. for another mile, and reach a bridge over the *Porthllwyd stream*. Again we have to take a path, which runs a little N. of the stream, but this time the climb is longer, a very steep ascent leading past several cottages. When the last of these is passed, take a ladder stile L., which leads by a wet path to the top of the principal fall. From here there is a splendid view down the wooded ravine, with the stream falling in cataract after cataract. To see the Fall itself well, it is necessary to scramble carefully on the slippery tracks at its foot, leaving our pathway a little before the top. The amount of water is not so great as at Dolgarog, nor is the sheer descent

Company and North Wales Power Company" have established works at Dolgarog, and with the approval of our Prime Minister are engaged in "harnessing these vast water powers, which had run to waste, for the benefit of the community" and "founding a large industrial community amid lovely surroundings." Truly we are a strange nation.

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so deep, but the fall is lovely, with a beautiful setting of greenery, and prolonged by pretty cascades. Of the two glens Porthllwyd is perhaps the finest, but there are unfortunately no paths leading to the lower course of the stream.

CHAPTER VII

BETTWS-Y-COED

[*Approaches*—(a) From Chester (rail via Conway), p. 37. (b) From Llandudno and Conway (rail, road, or steamer), p. 62. (c) From Barmouth and the Merioneth country (rail) by Minffordd Junction and Blaenau Ffestiniog, Ch. XIV. This is not so expeditious as the Chester route, and only recommended to those who are visiting the Cader Idris district first. (d) From Corwen (road 22 m.). A motor bus now runs daily. The road is good for cycling, though not very interesting except for the last 6 m., where it gradually descends the Conway valley into Bettws-y-Coed. It is part of Telford's road to Bangor and Holyhead. (e) From Bangor and Capel Curig (road), p. 161. (f) From Carnarvon, Llanberis, and Capel Curig. Ch. XI. and p. 151, reverse way.]

I. 1. THE name Bettws-y-Coed, "the chapel in the wood," indicates that here was a subordinate church or chapel—still remaining—surrounded by a small village, which had no name in history, until it became famous for its natural beauty. It is often called the "paradise of N. Wales," and, so far as valley scenery is referred to, the name is well deserved. At this point the Conway valley reaches its maximum of beauty, and almost immediately separates into four narrow

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branches, down which the mountain streams of the Conway itself, the Machno, the Lledr, and the Llugwy descend to form a united river. Each of these delightful valleys is full of beautiful combinations of wood, water, and crag, which will repay loving and minute study. The element indeed of grandeur is absent, for the great mountains stand well away to the W. Moel Siabod, the nearest of the Snowdonian giants, shows a graceful cone at the heads of the Llugwy and Lledr valleys, but all the other mountains are hidden by the low bounding hills, from 700 to 900 ft. high. These however are splendidly effective, since they are steep-sided, thickly wooded, and often crowned with rock bastions. When scaled, they provide stone platforms, commanding good valley views, and an irregular plateau, capital for rambling, whence splendid views are to be had of the great mountain range to the W. The whole district, both upland and valley, is intersected by paths and tracks, on which the visitor may freely ramble, without fear of trespassing.

2. *The village* is situated just where the Llugwy debouches from its narrow valley to join the Conway, passing between what George Borrow describes as "two immense doorposts of rock." These are *Cyrau* (N.) and *Garth Eryr* (S.) Both are crowned by steep rock walls, rising from a perfect sea of greenery. Across the Conway on the far side of the valley (E.) is a third hill, *Gallt-y-Foel*, mainly of the same type, but more completely shrouded in woods. On the W. side of the narrow valley left between these three hills lies the village, hardly more than one long street, bordering the Holyhead road. The houses cluster thickest where the road has the Llugwy close on the N. When road and river diverge, they grow thinner but

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continue more or less to the point where the road crosses the Conway by the Waterloo Bridge S. of the village. There are comparatively few houses on the N. side of the Llugwy, but these include some of the best-placed lodging-houses. The village consists almost entirely of hotels, lodging-houses, and a few shops. Nearly all are well built of stone, and the general effect is quite pleasing. Trees are abundant, sometimes overarching the road, and the main features of the scenery are never hidden. The new church is large and handsome, pseudo-Norman in style. The outside is perhaps a little heavy, but the inside is well arranged. The best known of the four or five hotels is the Royal Oak, which shows inside a sign-board painted by David Cox, who first discovered the artistic beauties of the spot, and visited it for a period of 40 years. It had already been a holiday-resort for some time, probably since the completion of the Holyhead road about 1815, being frequented by tourists and anglers. When Borrow passed this way in 1854, he noticed "neat dwellings for the accommodation of visitors, with cool apartments on the ground floor and large windows looking towards the precipitous side of the mighty northern hill." Since then, the example set by David Cox, and the company of artists, who foregathered with him at the Royal Oak, has been continuously followed to the present day, so that there is hardly a pretty view on the Llugwy or on the Lledr, which has not been painted again and again, and few beauty spots in the United Kingdom are more famous. At present the branch railway and the motor char-à-banc bring visitors of a less satisfactory order, *i.e.* locust-swarms of day tourists from Llandudno and other watering-places on the N. coast. Accordingly scoffers have begun to call Bettws-

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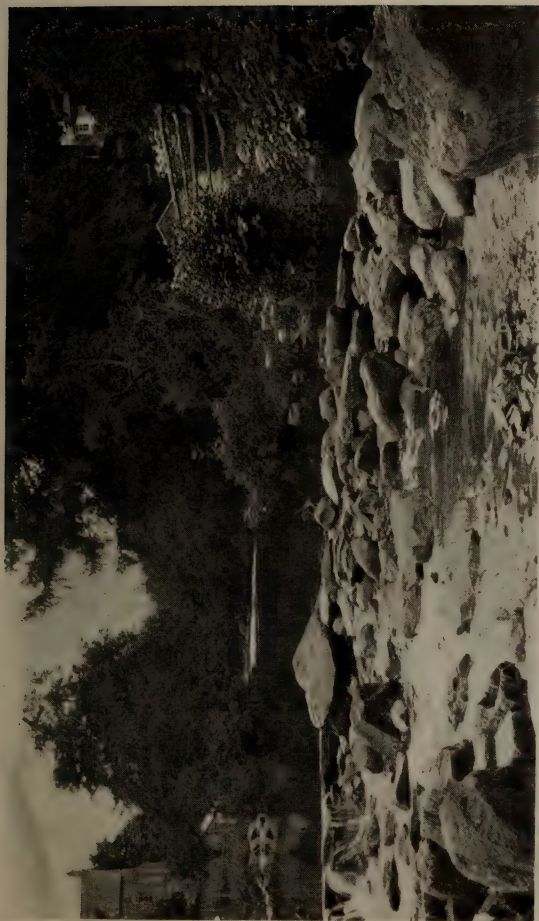
y-Coed the "twopenny Paradise," that being the modest sum for admission charged for each waterfall and beauty spot. But the place and its surroundings are so lovely, that the intending visitor should not be deterred by this consideration.

3. Before describing the walks a few points in the village itself must first be mentioned. (a) *Pont-y-Pair* (the "bridge of the cauldron") is the beautiful old bridge over the Llugwy in the centre of the village. It has been doubtfully attributed to Inigo Jones, but does not look at all like his style (see also p. 112). Another tradition assigns it to a mason named Hywel in the 15th cent. In any case its attractions are picturesque rather than antiquarian. Just above it the river descends some rocks in a foaming cascade, a wonderful sight after heavy rain. A little above the falls is a pretty island with fir trees, and a few yards further up is the *Still Pool*, a lakelike stretch of water overhung by trees. On both sides of the river the hanging woods rise up steeply.

(b) *The Old Church* is reached by a road, which turns off E. from the Holyhead road, a little S. of the Station road. Though services are no longer held there, it is kept in good repair, and, as it is ivy-clad, and has two fine yews on the S., it is very picturesque. The structure shows no ancient features, but inside there is a font with a rudely carved base which can hardly be later than Norman, and a carved pulpit with the date 1697. Also in a recess under a pointed arch is an armed effigy with the barely legible inscription :

Hic jacet Gruffydd ap Dafydd Goch
Agnus Dei, miserere mei.

He was grandson of Dafydd, brother of the last Prince Llewelyn, and died about 1380. Beyond the



THE "STILL POOL" ON LLUGWY

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church a pleasant stroll may be taken by a path beside the *Church Pool*, a deep and quiet reach on the Conway. A little further the path turns R., and crosses the Conway by some picturesque stepping-stones. By leaving the path and continuing the walk due N., we can soon reach the meeting-place of the Conway and the Llugwy.

(c) *The Miners' Bridge* is about $\frac{1}{2}$ m. above Pont-y-Pair, and is reached by a pleasant stroll. Cross to the N. side, and turn up the valley by a good path. After passing a few houses, the path leads into a beautiful wood. Then it emerges into more open country, with good views of the opposite hillside, and enters the woods again. Just afterwards a d.p. directs us to take the left-hand path leading to the river. The bridge is a rough and slanting wooden ladder, which descends from a high rock on the N. side to lower rocks on the S. Beneath it the river Llugwy runs rapidly in a ravine between white slaty rocks, and forms several cascades. As the banks are thickly wooded, the vista is lovely both ways. Directly after crossing the bridge, we ascend to the Capel Curig road, by which we return. The whole round is little more than a mile.

II. The various *walks and rambles round Bettws-y-Coed* are mainly grouped under the descriptions of the four valleys and the three hills. The principal points of interest (for many of which a charge of twopence is made) will thus fall into their natural places. These points are the Fairy Glen, the Conway Falls, Pandy Mill Falls, Pont-y-Pant, Dolwyddelan Castle, the Swallow Falls, Llyn-y-Parc, Llyn Elsi, Capel Garmon, and the Cromlech

1. (a) *The Conway and Machno Valleys*.—The following walk of about 7 m. includes all the best

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points on the Conway and the Machno. The upper courses of both rivers need but a brief reference. Take the Holyhead road S. through the village till it crosses the Conway by the iron *Waterloo Bridge* built in 1815, "the same year the battle of Waterloo was fought," as an inscription running the length of the bridge in large letters tells us. The view down stream is specially charming. After crossing turn R., and take the lower road, which keeps nearest to the river. A short mile brings us to Beaver Bridge. Directly below it the river expands into the very beautiful *Beaver Pool*, framed in trees and with the Bettws hills well grouped behind it. A monstrous reptile, like a crocodile, called the Avanc, is fabled to have made its last appearance in this pool, and to have been dragged from its depths by iron chains. A little above the bridge is the junction of the Conway and the Lledr. For some way above the watersmeet the Conway runs in a beautiful deep-cut gorge, of which the best part is the *Fairy Glen*. The way to this (charge 2d.) is plainly marked on the L. of the road, just before reaching Beaver Bridge. About $\frac{1}{4}$ m. up a lane there is a flight of steps R., which lead to the rocky bed of the stream just below the glen. The scene is sweetly pretty, but quite in miniature. The river has cut a narrow passage between two perpendicular rocks, not very high, but with their upper parts gracefully draped with oak trees. Through the gap appears a fir-clad hill slope. Returning to the lane we turn R., and ascend continuously with the deep and romantic gorge of the Conway imperfectly seen on the R. There is a grand retrospective view over the Lledr valley. Moel Siabod stands at the head, with the double-peaked Lliwedd (L.) and Glyder Fach and Tryfaen (R.). In about $\frac{3}{4}$ m. from the Fairy Glen



THE BEAVER POOL, RIVER CONWAY

we reach the *Conway Falls* (charge 2d.). A flight of steps again leads to the bottom of the ravine, which is here deeper and on a grander scale than at the Fairy Glen. A short walk up the gorge, with wooded precipices on either hand, leads to the Falls, where the Conway leaps from an upper and more inaccessible ravine. The fall is double, the two branches curiously diverging at more than a right angle, and descending 50 ft. in cascade fashion. On the rock between the Falls there are some ruined fragments of a salmon ladder, which no longer seriously diminish the picturesqueness of the scene. A little above the Falls the Conway and Machno unite their waters, but the deep-set gorge guarded by sheer cliffs, and shrouded by thick-growing trees, keeps its secret, and there is no path as yet cut to allow the visitor to see the watersmeet. We have to retrace our steps to the lane, which in a few yards joins the main Holyhead road about 2 m. from Bettws-y-Coed. (From here we may (1) return direct to Bettws-y-Coed, (2) follow the road up the Conway, which remains beautiful, but does not retain the supreme attraction of its lower course.) But if we wish to see the Machno, we must leave the road nearly 200 yds. further R., for the road leading up the Machno valley. This almost at once crosses the Conway by a bridge, from which the foaming torrent may be seen far below in its deeply-cut narrow ravine. The road proceeds now up the Machno valley, which is green and pastoral, but has no striking scenery. In about $\frac{1}{2}$ m. there is a turning R., close to an old toll-house. Taking this, we cross a bridge over the Machno, which up to this point has been a quiet stream flowing among meadows, but now changes into a rapid torrent for the last half mile of its course. Just below is the so-

called *Roman Bridge*, a picturesque single arch without parapets, pleasingly overarched by oak trees. Whatever its real antiquity, it is certainly not Roman, for it is off the line of Sarn Helen, the one Roman road in this district. Turning again R., along the farther bank of the Machno, we soon reach *Pandy Mill*, set exactly at the *Machno Falls* (admission 2d.). This is a very favourite spot with artists. The Falls are partly caused by the water streaming down from the disused sluice of the old mill. The gorge into which the Machno tumbles is deep, and picturesquely set in abundant foliage. Directly below the Falls it sinks rapidly deeper and deeper to its junction with the Conway, but the thick-growing trees hide all further view. The path leads past the junction, and onwards down the left bank of the Conway, but nothing more is seen of either river except tantalizing glimpses. We descend gradually to a bridge over the Lledr. A little before reaching it, a path strikes off R., leading to another view of the Fairy Glen (admission 2d.). A rock in the middle of the river is reached from the bank by a step-ladder. Formerly the interval was spanned by the "Jubilee Bridge," but, as a local Welsh boy expressed it, this has long ago "gone away with the river." From the rock there is a good view *down* the glen, and also of the visitors who are looking *up* it, from the view-point already described. Returning to the path, we cross the Lledr by the bridge, which gives delightful views of the river in its rocky bed, and join the Lledr valley road, turning R. A little further there is a very beautiful view of the junction of the Conway and the Lledr, the former emerging from its rocky gorge. Beaver Bridge is soon regained, but a pleasant variation is not to cross it, but to continue along the W. bank of the Conway until Bettws-y-Coed is reached.

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(b) *The upper Machno valley* (Bettws-y-Coed to Ffestiniog by Penmachno, 14½ m.).—For about 2 m. above their junction with the Conway, valley and river retain their quiet and pastoral character. At 4 m. from Bettws-y-Coed *Penmachno* is reached, a quiet slate-roofed village, beneath a rounded green hill, which so far has seemed to close the valley. The church was in old times of much importance. It has been rebuilt, but retains three ancient Christian tombstones of the 5th or 6th cent. The most interesting has the inscription "*Carausius hic jacet in hoc congeries*" (*sic*) "*lapidum*," surmounted by the Christian X P monogram, found nowhere else in Wales. Of course it is not the tomb of the celebrated adventurer, who was killed at York A.D. 297, and could not have been a Christian; but "of another gentleman of the same name," who lived two centuries later, but may have been named after the original hero. The church is said also to be the burial-place of Jorwerth, father of Llewelyn the Great. It contains a memorial window to Bishop Morgan, translator of the Welsh Bible, who was born in the parish about 1540.

At Penmachno the valley divides, the main branch passing L. of the green hill already mentioned. It extends 3 m. further, growing narrower and a little wilder, but in the main green and pleasant. About 2½ m., just after some cottages, a mountain road strikes L. up Cwm Caregog, which is the shortest, though not the best, route, from Bettws-y-Coed to Ffestiniog. It is only a bridle-track, and no road for carriages or cycles. When in 1½ m. the summit level is gained, *Llyn Conway*, interesting as the source of the Conway, is 1 m. distant E., but there is no path, and to see the lake one must guide oneself by the compass over the desolate moorland. The lake,

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visited by Pennant, is a large sheet of water, and contains three small islands. It lies on the flat moorland, 1488 ft. above sea level, with no hills rising much above it.

The mountain road to Ffestiniog keeps a level of from 1400 to 1600 ft. for about 3 m. It is presently joined by the road from Pentre Foelas, which traverses the upper valley of the Conway passing Yspytty Ifan (*v. p.* 25), and 2 m. further it runs into the Bala to Ffestiniog road, $3\frac{1}{2}$ m. from Ffestiniog. The route is not much to be recommended, except for those who wish to see Llyn Conwy.

2. (a) *The Lledr valley by road* (Bettws-y-Coed to Blaenau Ffestiniog, $12\frac{1}{2}$ m.).—Keep S. on the road W. of the Conway till past its junction with the Lledr, and continue up the Lledr valley. The scenery of the next mile is merely pretty, but the two miles from the railway viaduct to Pont-y-Pant have made the Lledr a name beloved by generations of artists. Their peculiar charm is hard to fix. The beautiful valley scenery of wood, water, and crag, so characteristic of Bettws-y-Coed, is here blended with a wilder strain, but yet the details seem more subtly and delicately finished than before. A little beyond the viaduct a rock will be found L., giving a fine view. The flanking hills show rocks with patches of trees. In the centre is a tumbled mass of rocks, trees, and heather, with the graceful cone of Moel Siabod, in effect not unlike Bow Fell, rising beyond. Further on, the irregularities of the valley give place to a delightful green strath. The road keeps above the valley R., but the wise visitor will look out for opportunities of descending to the stream, and walking along it. For instance, about $\frac{1}{2}$ m. above the viaduct, a grassy cart track descends to a point where the current

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of the Lledr foams round an interrupting wooded island; or further on a path descends to a charming wooden footbridge. Near *Pont-y-Pant* (the "bridge of the hollow") the beauty of the Lledr culminates. The valley contracts to a narrow wooded gorge, down which the stream dashes in a succession of beautiful cascades, best seen from the large boulders in the river-bed. *Pont-y-Pant* itself is a wooden bridge on stone piles, which stands at the head of the gorge (but only leads to the railway station). From it there is a fine retrospective view of the beautiful valley we have just traversed.

Above *Pont-y-Pant* the valley opens out more widely into flat green fields, through which the river flows lazily. Instead of low hills, it is now bounded by high mountains. Right in front appears the range which shuts in the head of the valley, of which *Moel Lledr* and *Moel Meirch* are the chief points in view. On the L. rise the bare grassy mountains of *Y Ro Wen* and *Moel Penamnen* (about 2000 ft.), between which is the deep cleft of *Cwm Penamnen*, traversed by an old Roman road, called *Sarn Helen* like many other Roman roads in Wales. *Sarn* means "causeway," and *Helen*, "the Queen of the legions," is called in legends the Welsh wife of the Emperor *Maximus* (p. 184); the road runs straight from *Conovium* (p. 64) to *Tomen y Mur* (p. 31). It passes close by the *Miners' Bridge* at *Bettws-y-Coed*, and up the hill to *Pont-y-Pant*. Then it crosses the *Lledr*, runs up *Cwm Penamnen* and vanishes, reappearing later near *Tomen y Mur*.

On the R. of the valley *Moel Siabod* presently reveals its full stature close at hand. *Dolwyddelan* when reached is found to be an unattractive quarrying village. The old church (modernized) contains a

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brass tablet to Meredydd ap Ifan, knight, d. 1525, probably its founder. There is also an old rood-screen, and a knocker, said to be a "sanctuary ring" but probably only for closing the door. About a mile further is *Dolwyddelan Castle* (charge 2d.), splendidly placed on a steep knoll, which rises from the desolate moorland beneath Moel Siabod. All that is left is a square battlemented tower (repaired), and the fragments of an old wall. Except the pointed window-arches, there are no marks of style. Inside there is one square chamber, with a fireplace possibly Tudor, and a staircase leading to the battlements. The real charm of the place lies in its romantic situation, and its historical associations. The original building was a Welsh fort, of an uncertain age, intended to guard the head of the Lledr-Conway valley, just as Deganwy Castle guarded the mouth, and so to defend the E. approaches to Snowdonia. At the end of the 12th cent., when the sons of Owain Gwynedd divided his inheritance, Jorwerth (the flat-nosed), his eldest son, received Nant Conwy as his share. The story that he was excluded from the succession because of his deformity appears to be unhistorical. He made Dolwyddelan his castle, and may even have built the existing building. That his son, Llewelyn the Great, was born in the castle is probable, but not proved by direct evidence. In January 1283 the castle was taken by an army of Edward I.'s, which had crossed the watershed from the Clwyd valley to Bettws-y-Coed. In the 16th cent. Meredydd, ancestor of the Wynne family (pp. 113, 4), and founder of the church, came into possession of the castle. His reason for leaving his home in the W. of Carnarvonshire was a strange one. "If I live at home," he said, "I must either kill my own kinsmen, or be killed by them." Accordingly he

removed to where he had only robbers to fight. His predecessor in the castle had simply been a robber chief, but Meredydd instituted a reign of law and order, and waged a crusade against outlaws all round. His chief enemies were a robber band of Yspytty Ifan, who had the pleasant habit of waylaying Meredydd's family when walking to church. However, he finally triumphed over all his enemies, and left a peaceful heritage to his 23 children. The castle is also referred to in Southey's "Madoc."

About $\frac{1}{2}$ m. beyond the castle the road crosses the river. During the next mile the peaks of Snowdon appear W., over a depression a good deal L. of Moel Siabod. At 8 m. from Bettws-y-Coed we reach the station called *Roman Bridge*. However, the bridge over the Lledr at this point is not ancient, and certainly not Roman, being quite off the line of Sarn Helen. Here is virtually the end of the valley, though a rough track goes on for $1\frac{1}{2}$ m. to some scattered farms below Moel Lledr, where the stream rises. A little before Roman Bridge station the main road turns out of the valley, and crosses a pass 1263 ft. high, descending among the quarries of Blaenau Ffestiniog.

(b) *The Lledr valley by rail*.—This is a fascinating ride, but should only be considered supplementary to the road. A special "Observation Car" is attached to some trains, for which there is an extra charge of 6d. a head. The railway starts R. of the river, crossing at the viaduct 2 m. up, with a capital view both ways. After this, being on the opposite side of the valley from the road, it catches points of view not visible from the latter. The Pont-y-Pant rapids are not seen, but above them the views of the valley are better than those from the road. Moel Siabod and Dolwyddelan Castle are well seen. Then comes a view of Snowdon,

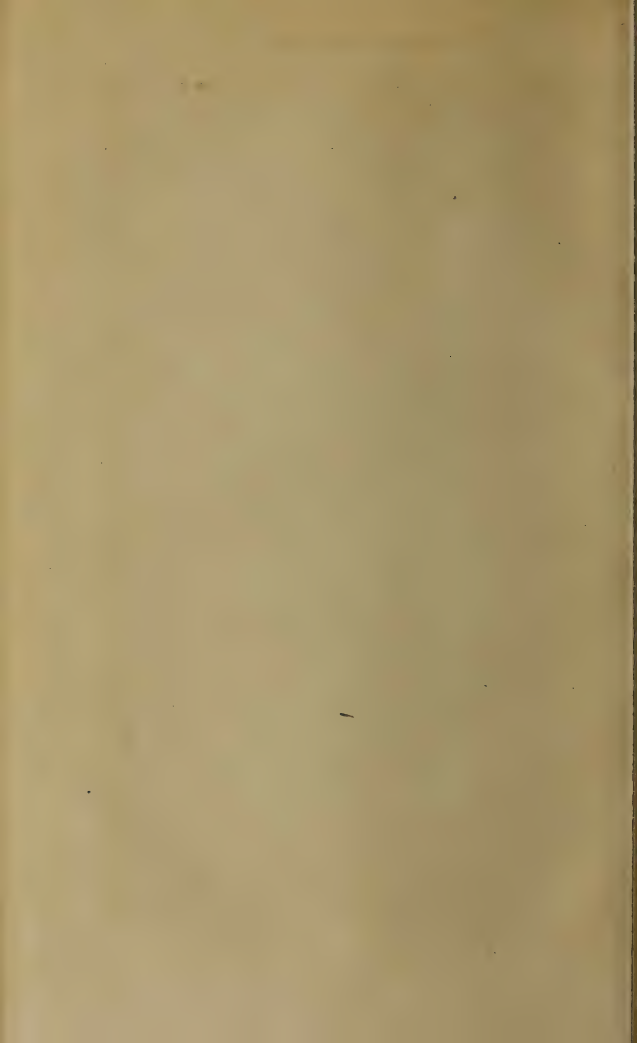
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and finally one of the Glyders. The railway goes right to the head of the valley, 2 m. further than the road, and then turns S. into a tunnel, on the far side of which is Blaenau Ffestiniog.

3. (a) *The Llugwy valley* (Bettws-y-Coed to Capel Curig, 5 m.).—The only rival of the Lledr in loveliness is the Llugwy. The ordinary road up the valley must first be described, then the still more fascinating ramble by the N. bank of the stream. The road up the Llugwy is one of the best engineered parts of the great Holyhead road. In the 5 m. ascent to Capel Curig there are only three places where it is at all steep, corresponding to the three points where the gorge of the river narrows, and the stream falls in rapids or cascades. The first $\frac{1}{2}$ m. is level, passing between the great ramparts of Cyrau (N.) and Garth Eryr (S.). Then the road ascends through thick woods, which girdle the ravine over which the Miners' Bridge is thrown. For a short time, after the woods stop, the road is level. On the near side of the river there is a green field or two, but on the far side the thick woods continue with fine effect. The next rise takes us to the narrow gorge containing the *Swallow Falls* (charge 2d.). Above it rises a steep crag, with a ruined summer-house perched on the top. The abruptness of the gorge, and the fine setting of rock and wood, make this one of the most striking waterfalls in Snowdonia. There are three leaps, of which the upper one (usually photographed) is rather a complicated assemblage of rapids and cataracts after the Lodore type than a real waterfall. The second leap is sheer and well seen from its foot; the third leap cannot be seen at all from the paths on the S. bank. The shrieking of the lower fall is supposed to proceed from the tortured spirit of Sir John Wynne, condemned to this purgatory for



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cruelty and injustice, but his recorded history (p. 114) shows that he was a good and honourable man. Half a mile above the Falls Ty Hyll Bridge is passed. The valley is again nearly level, and grandly dominated by the cone of Moel Siabod, which forms the background to several lovely reaches, one including some picturesque stepping-stones. After another mile the road becomes steep for the third time, at the turn of the gorge near the picturesque *Pont Cyfyng*, below which the river forms beautiful cascades among huge boulders. At a turn of the valley Carnedd Dafydd and Carnedd Llewelyn appear in front. The beauty of the river continues all the way to Capel Curig, above which its course is rather over a desolate upland moor than a regular valley.

(b) *The Llugwy valley by the N. bank.*—This route gives the best views both of the Swallow Falls and of the whole Llugwy ravine. Start from Pont-y-Pair by the N. bank as far as the Miners' Bridge (p. 129); but instead of turning L. to the bridge go straight on. The oaks here give way to larch firs, whence this part of the ramble is called *Pine Walk*. Through the larch foliage the Llugwy is seen at intervals below, flaming along a deep ravine. Presently we cross a stile into an open field, whence there are fine views of the opposite hills. The first turn L. soon afterwards is a *cul de sac*, leading only to a rough bridge, built for some industrial purpose, in connection with a quarry, but affording a good view of the river gorge. At the second turn L. a d.p. points to the Swallow Falls, whither we are bound. [The path to the R. leads to Llyn Geirionydd (p. 146).] We soon pass a cottage, where a modest charge of 1d. is made. The walk is now fascinating in the extreme. The path rapidly bends riverward, and we are soon on a terrace pathway, half-way up a steep hillside with

the river gorge immediately below. A little afterwards a view of the *Swallow Falls* is revealed in front, all three of the Falls being seen at once, the whole beautifully set in banks of foliage, and Moel Siabod rising grandly above. The only drawback is that the thick foliage screen partly conceals the falling waters. The path soon turns a corner, and gives a view *down* the deep wooded gorge, where the Llugwy flows. We are now close to the Falls, and, by scrambling on the rocks above (which requires care), can get more or less good views of all three falls. The views on the whole are more impeded by trees than those on the S. bank, but otherwise finer. From the rock at the top of the highest fall a narrow path continues by the river side, and in about $\frac{1}{2}$ m. reaches Ty Hyll Bridge, $3\frac{1}{2}$ m. from Bettws-y-Coed by road. Or the visitor can climb to the ruined summer-house, and thence strike N. till he reaches the mountain road leading from Llanrwst to Ty Hyll (p. 117).

4. *Cyrau Hill and Llyn-y-Parc*.—Cyrau or Clogwyn Cyrau is the name of the hill just N. of the entrance to the Llugwy valley. From below the bastions look quite inaccessible, but the ascent is really simple enough. Cross Pont-y-Pair, and turn L. After passing three houses, turn up R. by a lane between the third and fourth (Summer Hill and Fron Heulog). This lane divides again almost at once, but there is the usual d.p., pointing straight on for Llyn-y-Parc, and by a footpath L. to Cyrau. The best ramble is to go one way and return by the other, a round of about $3\frac{1}{2}$ m. Let us take Cyrau first. The path climbs steeply through the wood with a couple of bends, and presently takes us by a stile to the open moorland at the top, just W. of the formidable precipices. A winding path R. takes us round to the broad rock-

platform above them, from which the views of the valley below are superb. The actual hill-top is a little further N., crowned with a flagstaff. The views gained from these breezy irregular heights include many lovely objects. W. are most of the Snowdonian mountains. Moel Siabod is the nearest, and conceals nearly the whole of the Snowdon group, though Crib Goch looks over his R. shoulder. Next (R.) is the Llanberis Pass depression, then the serrated masses of the Glyders, and the grand triple-headed pyramid of Tryfaen. Then comes the depression of Nant Ffrancon, after which is the long mountain chain beginning at Carnedd Llewelyn and Carnedd Dafydd and running to Y Foel Fras. In front are the detached mountains of Pen Helyg and Pen Llithrig and some lesser craggy heights. Immediately below are views up and down the Conway valley, and up the Llugwy. To the S. and S.E. are several mountains, the Moelwyn and Cynicht group being continued E. by the range of Moel Penamnen and Y Ro Wen, while, much further off, is the lofty Arenig.

Llyn-y-Parc is now almost due N. Starting without any distinct path, we first make for a gate, leading to a farm in a hollow a little below, called Pen-yr-allt Isaf. After passing the farm, the delightful moorland will tempt many to ramble. The path, which may be regained at any point in the next half mile, lies on the R., close to the wall bounding the woods. Presently it crosses two stiles to the foot of the lake. *Llyn-y-Parc* is a narrow sheet of water, $\frac{3}{4}$ m. long, sunk in a pretty but shallow basin. On the W. the moorland rises about 100 ft. above it, while the thick pine woods come close on the E. side. The scene, though miniature, is very pleasing. Unfortunately the position of the lake, at the head of a steep

ravine down which its effluent falls, has marked it out as the obvious victim for mining engineers, first for a lead mine, then for electric works. The path we are on traverses the E. side of the lake, and then, descending gradually through the woods, falls into the cart track from Ty Hyll Bridge to Llanrwst (p. 118), reaching the Trefriw road $3\frac{1}{2}$ m. S. of Bettws-y-Coed. But if we wish to return to Bettws-y-Coed at once, we turn sharp R. at the foot of the lake, and find ourselves at the head of the ravine by which the effluent of the lake descends to the Conway. This ravine was intended by nature to be a fair wooded cwm, and, even now, ruined as it is, its lofty and well wooded cliffs form a worthy frame for a beautiful section of the Conway valley beyond. We descend by the R. of the ravine, then turn R. through the wood. A pleasant woodland walk among oak trees leads back to our starting point at Bettws-y-Coed in about $1\frac{1}{2}$ m.

It should be added that the upland region of gorse and heather which we crossed is intersected by numerous paths and tracks, which can be combined in several delightful walks. For instance there is another route to Llyn-y-Parc, which starts a little further up the Llugwy valley, and climbs by the farm of Pen-yr-allt Uchaf, not to be confused with the farm already mentioned.

5. *Garth Eryr and Llyn Elsi*.—Garth Eryr is the fine bastion which rises S. of the entrance to the Llugwy valley. It is thickly wooded, and crowned with precipitous rocks, though not quite so formidable-looking as those on Cyrau. At the top there is an upland plateau which fills up the whole space between the lower valleys of the Llugwy and the Lledr, reaching W. to the depression traversed by a section of the old Roman road, Sarn Helen. On the moorland there

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lies a small tarn, Llyn Elsi, 2 m. from Bettws-y-Coed, which is reached by a most delightful ramble. Two paths lead to it, one of which starts behind the new church, while the other, the Jubilee path, begins at a flight of steps leading into a wood a little way up the Capel Curig road, just after the houses stop. We will climb by the church route and descend by the Jubilee path. The path near the church starts off L. as a rough cart road, from which presently a zigzag path diverges R., climbing steeply through a wood. The "d.p.'s" make it impossible to miss the way. When the top is reached, there is a long half mile on the moorland to the N. end of the tarn.

Llyn Elsi is a not very large tarn, of irregular shape, lying on the open moorland, with no surroundings of rocky hills or woods. Nevertheless it is decidedly pleasing. Looking from the N. end, there is a wooded islet, covered with birch trees, in the middle of the far end, with Y Ro Wen rising as a background. From the E. side of the lake a view may be got with Moel Siabod beyond, but at some distance. The mountain view W. is exceedingly fine. Moel Siabod itself is the nearest of the mountains. R. of it are the Glyders and Tryfaen, and then a most fascinating group on the far side of the deep-set Llugwy valley. In the foreground are the rocky irregular hills of which Creigiau Gleision is the highest, leading up to Pen Llithrig, then to Pen Helyg, and finally to Carnedd Llewelyn, the steps upward being exceedingly well marked. S.W. is the Moelwyn and Cynicht group, and S., at a greater distance, is Arenig, with the Berwyns S.E. on the far horizon. The Jubilee path by which we return starts N., and keeps level awhile, with the whole lower part of the Llugwy valley beautifully displayed below. Then it begins to slope

downwards, and passes by a stile into the wood, through which it descends steeply to the steps already mentioned, close to the Capel Curig road. From the S. of Llyn Elsi a path leads down into the Lledr valley. Or we may ramble W. till Sarn Helen is struck, and either descend S. to Pont-y-Pant on the Lledr, or N. to the Llugwy valley near the Miners' Bridge.

6. *Gallt-y-Foel, Capel Garmon, and the Cromlech.*—Gallt-y-Foel is the hill which stands on the E. side of the Conway valley, exactly opposite the end of the Llugwy valley. From below it appears entirely covered with fir-woods, but in reality the top is a rock platform, admirably adapted for view-points. It is ascended from the Capel Garmon road. Capel Garmon is a small village, lying on high ground about 2 m. from Bettws-y-Coed. In itself it is of no interest, but the walk through it, returning by the cromlech, is delightful, and commands first-rate views. It can easily be combined with the ascent of Gallt-y-Foel, but, if the visitor has only time for one walk in this direction, and prefers scenery to antiquities, his best course will be to climb the hill and leave the village alone.

(a) *Gallt-y-Foel* (822).—Cross the Waterloo Bridge, turn R. into the upper road and immediately afterwards turn L. into a path, which starts by some stone steps, with a d.p. to Capel Garmon. It climbs the hill steeply, and, when the woods are passed, commands lovely views of the valley. At the top it runs into the Capel Garmon road, which starts more to the N. Immediately afterwards a small hamlet, Garthmyn, is passed. Here leave the road, turn L., and pass round by the back of all the houses to a gate admitting to the open fell. The path is now plain to the R., and the cairn visible. The best view point

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is not the cairn itself, but a rock platform below it, which directly overhangs the valley. Bettws-y-Coed and its beautiful valley are right at our feet, and beyond it is a splendèd view up the lower reach of the Llugwy valley. To the N. is an equally fine view down the Conway valley, reaching to Llanrwst. The river itself is visible in many places. To the W. the Snowdonian mountains rise in majestic array. Snowdon itself is concealed behind Moel Siabod, but otherwise the whole range is in view as far as Tal-y-Fan, with Pen Helyg and Pen Llithrig in front. There seems no alternative way back.

(b) *Capel Garmon and the Cromlech.*—Take the path described in (a) to Garthmyn, and continue half a mile on the road, turning R. about half-way. In Capel Garmon itself the view from the churchyard may be noticed. The W. mountains stand up grandly, essentially as they were described in the view from Gallt-y-Foel. In truth, however, it is scarcely worth while to search for special view-points, since the mountains are visible from nearly every step of the walk. After passing the village, the views get even better, and first Yr Aran, and then Lliwedd, begin to appear from behind Moel Siabod. A long half mile of road is traversed, and then a d.p. to the Cromlech appears to the R. This takes us over a field to a farm, where another d.p. points out the way to the *Cromlech*. This lies in the centre of a cornfield, surrounded by a walled enclosure, and shadowed by a dwarf oak. It consists of a long sunken chamber, about 5 or 6 ft. high. The S. part is covered with a large slab of slate, resting on 6 or 7 uprights. The N. part is open, with sides partly of rock, partly of slate slabs. It has been partly repaired, but is a very interesting memorial. Beyond the cromlech the path crosses two stone stiles,

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and then turns downward to a farm at the bottom of a field. Here a cart track starts R., which descends to the Corwen road, about $2\frac{1}{2}$ m. from Bettws-y-Coed. The whole round is about $6\frac{1}{2}$ m.

7. *Bettws-y-Coed to Llyn Geirionydd*.—For the lake and its approaches from Trefriw see p. 120, but the walk from Bettws-y-Coed is also an interesting one. Take the path on the N. side of the Llugwy valley (p. 139). When the turn to the Swallow Falls is reached, do not take it, but keep on R. The path begins to ascend and gives, first a distant view of Snowdon, then a remarkable and beautiful view of Moel Siabod, framed in the richly wooded ravine of the Swallow Falls. Soon we pass a farm, and cross a tributary stream by a foot-bridge. A small hill is now straight ahead, but, instead of climbing it, the track turns sharp R. A lead mine soon appears in front. Our path diverges somewhat L. and crosses a field to the mountain road between Capel Curig and Llanrwst, where turn R. (For the rest of the ramble see p. 149.)

8. *Down the Conway valley*.—The road past Gwydir Castle to Llanrwst (4 m.) and Trefriw (5 m.) is mostly among woods. With the aid of the railway and the cycle the tourist can explore the whole valley from Bettws-y-Coed, include all the rambles described in Ch. VI. and most of those to be described in Ch. VIII.

CHAPTER VIII

CAPEL CURIG

[*Approaches*—Bettws-y-Coed, p. 138; Bangor, p. 158; Carnarvon and Llanberis, Ch. XI. and p. 151.]

I. 1. CAPEL CURIG is in the Llugwy valley, about 600

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ft. above sea level, and $5\frac{1}{4}$ m. W. of Bettws-y-Coed. The village has one of the most remarkable situations in N. Wales. The transition from cultivated to uncultivated country is here so plainly marked, that no visitor can fail to notice it. To the E. are what may be fairly called the "lowlands" of the district, a land of plateaux rarely rising above 800 ft., with hill-sides thickly clothed in trees, and intersected by rich, beautiful valleys. If we have approached from Bettws-y-Coed, we were in this country only $\frac{1}{2}$ m. back, but now the scene has entirely changed. Wild, bare rocks have appeared to the N. and S., while on the W. a region of desolate uplands is revealed. Two barren valleys are in view, stretching far into the heart of Snowdonia proper, and at their head huge mountains are seen to rear themselves at a distance of only 4 or 5 m. The most N. of these two valleys should more strictly be described as an upland moor, which the Llugwy traverses, descending from its cradle in the tarn of Ffynnon Llugwy, under the S.E. slope of Carnedd Llewelyn. After an uninteresting course of about 5 m. it is joined at Capel Curig by its principal tributary, flowing from the Nant-y-Gwryd, the more S. of the two valleys, which is as desolate as the former, and stretches right up to the roots of Snowdon. Directly the united streams pass Capel Curig and begin their long descent to Bettws-y-Coed, the character of the valley changes at once to the rich type of sylvan beauty, which makes the Llugwy famous among Welsh streams.

Capel Curig is therefore the gate of the Snowdonian mountains on the W. It is also a highly important point in the road-system of N. Wales. The great mountain mass of Carnarvonshire, as explained in the Introduction (pp. 5-7), is cut into three sections by two

remarkable passes which run like deeply-dug trenches straight through the region of the highest mountains. The W. slopes of these are known as the Nant Ffrancon and Llanberis passes ; the E. slopes are the two valleys, which meet at Capel Curig to form the Llugwy valley. The coach roads, which traverse them, may therefore be described as the main arteries of N. Wales. The principal of these is Telford's great road to Holyhead, which, after ascending from Bettws-y-Coed to Capel Curig, continues beside the Llugwy, the more N. of the two converging valleys, and, crossing a low watershed of about 1000 ft., descends the Nant Ffrancon to Bangor. The other coach road diverges L. at Capel Curig, ascends the Nant-y-Gwryd to a height of 1169 ft., and descends the pass of Llanberis to Llanberis, and then on to Carnarvon.

2. From an æsthetic point of view the village should have been built a little further down the Llugwy, about the point where the soft beauty of the valley begins. Some hotels and lodging-houses have been more recently erected there, and are likely to be the chief favourites of visitors. As it is, most of the houses are dotted about in a haphazard and ineffective way in the wider part of the valley, just where the two converging branches have met ; the only point where they cluster at all thickly being at the junction of the two roads. Also the valley at this point retains its wildness without any compensating grandeur, since none of the mountains are near enough to be effective. Accordingly visitors, who have just ascended the beautiful lower part of the Llugwy valley, are apt to be somewhat disappointed in Capel Curig. When, however, the interesting objects in view are more carefully observed, this feeling may tend to disappear. To the S. rises Moel Siabod to the height

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of 2860 ft., though hardly showing as fine a side as from the reaches of the Llugwy valley a little further down. At the end of Nant-y-Gwryd is perhaps the best distant view of the peaks of Snowdon. Y Wyddfa, the highest summit, stands up grandly in the centre with Crib Goch (R.), somewhat advanced in front of Crib y Ddysgyl, while on the L. a little further off is the double-peaked Lliwedd. The whole forms a most fascinating group in bright clear sunshine, and still more so perhaps when the peaks half emerge from a veil of cloud. In the foreground are the Llyniau Mymbyr, the twin lakes of Capel Curig, which form the sole ornament of the Nant-y-Gwryd. Between the two valleys lies Cefn-y-Capel, the rocky end of the long range of the Glyders. At the far end of the Llugwy valley are Carnedd Dafydd and Carnedd Llewelyn. In front of the latter is the lower mountain of Pen Helyg and more to the R. (exactly N.) is the finely shaped Pen Llithrig. Between Pen Llithrig and the lower Llugwy valley are the slopes of the rough craggy hills of Craig Wen and Clogwyn Mawr, belonging to the group of which the highest point is reached in the crags of Creigiau Gleision, between the valleys of Llyn Cowlyd and Llyn Crafnant. There are no buildings worth mentioning. The discarded old church has no architectural feature.

II. 1. *Capel Curig to Bettws-y-Coed* ($5\frac{1}{4}$ m.).—See reverse account (p. 138).

2. *Capel Curig to Llyn Geirionydd* (about 5 m.).—Take the E. road for $2\frac{1}{2}$ m. and just before Ty Hyll Bridge turn L. up the mountain road to Llanrwst (p. 117). After keeping to the road for about $1\frac{1}{2}$ m., and soon after the path from Bettws-y-Coed (p. 146), has come in on the R. turn L., when just short of a lead mine, by a well-marked track. This first passes

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L. the insignificant Llyn T'Yn-y-Mynydd, then some other lakelets. A pretty view over two of these can be obtained from a knoll L. The track then descends rapidly to the head of Llyn Geirionydd (see p. 121).

3. *Capel Curig to Llyn Crafnant and on to Trefriw* (6 m. See description reverse way, p. 121).—As an approach to Llyn Crafnant, this walk is even finer than the ascent to it from Trefriw. Start just N. of Capel Curig new church, climbing first between two rocky knobs. The crags of Clogwyn Mawr are now L., and accompany us right to the top of our pass. At first the path closely hugs the crags L., then it leaves them a while, crosses a moor and a stream, and, first ascending a little, descends to what appears to be the bed of an old tarn, round which it makes a long détour R., at last bending L. again back to Clogwyn Mawr. A well-marked path is now gradually ascended to the summit level (about 1100 ft.). Here the main track turns L., and descends rapidly to the valley-head. Almost directly there bursts upon us a beautiful view of Llyn Crafnant, which lies in the valley 500 ft. below. Two smooth flanking hills slope steeply to form its basin, the bracken-covered Careadwydd (L.), the heather-clad Mynydd Daulyn (R.). The gap at the foot of the lake is filled up by the blue distant hills of the Hiraethog plateau. We are standing high up on the amphitheatre of craggy hills, which surround the green fields at the head of the valley. (For further description and end of ramble see p. 122.)

4. *Capel Curig to Llyn Cowlyd* ($2\frac{1}{2}$ m.) *and on to Trefriw* ($8\frac{1}{2}$ m.).—The lake is very well worth seeing, but the subsequent walk to Trefriw is somewhat dreary. Take the Bangor road for $\frac{3}{4}$ m. Directly after the telegraph posts leave the road, take a path R. leading to the farm Tal-y-Waen, where continue in a N.W.



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direction, cross a brook, and bend round N. to a gate. A boggy moorland plateau has now to be crossed with a faint track, but the depression in which the lake lies is quite obvious, straight ahead N., and the line of telegraph posts guides in the same direction. The track presently skirts a wire fence, till we turn a corner and the lake is directly below us.

Llyn Cowlyd is a large sheet of water $1\frac{1}{2}$ m. long by 3 furlongs broad, and 1165 ft. above sea level. In effect it is a long, narrow and solemn-looking lake without a single tree in view near it. On the W. Pen Llithrig (2621) and on the E. Creigiau Gleision (c. 2000) rise precipitously from its very shores, both showing fine crags and screes. The chief defect of the lake is that it is open both at the head and the foot, so that the splendid flanking mountains somewhat lose their effect.

The path continues down the W. side. About half-way down, the crags on Creigiau Gleision show very finely. At this point the path diverges from the lake, so that it is better to descend to the margin, and skirt round it to the foot, whence the lake looks its best, since at the far end the two mountains are connected by a narrow strip of moorland, and Gallt-y-Gogo looks over the L. shoulder of Pen Llithrig. A rough path now descends the desolate valley beside Afon Ddu, the stream flowing from the lake. In another mile this rejoins the original track, now crossing the valley in the direction of Trefriw. Turn R. and follow the track to the summit ridge of Cefn Careadwydd. (For the rest of the walk see p. 123.)

5. *Capel Curig to Llanberis* ($10\frac{1}{2}$ m.).—Take the turn L. in the middle of the village, by the coach road which ascends the Nant-y-Gwryd. After the two lakes are passed, the valley is exceedingly dreary,

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but for the fine view of Snowdon in front. On the L. Moel Siabod shows its least interesting side, and on the R. are dull slopes connected with the long ridge of Glyder Fach, a glorious mountain indeed to climb, but which shows very little shapeliness from below on this side. After 4 m. we are glad to reach *Pen-y-Gwryd Inn* (906 ft.) at the head of the valley. The inn itself is of historic fame, having been a favourite with Charles Kingsley and Tom Hughes, and is introduced by the former into a scene in "Two Years Ago," where the half-mad Elsley rests here awhile, before his wild night climb up Glyder Fawr. The inn well keeps up its old reputation, and is a capital centre for mountain climbing, being indeed a special haunt of the scientific rock-climbers. Its situation is somewhat dreary. In front are sombre upland marshes leading to Moel Siabod. To the N. is the huge mass of the two Glyders, steep-sided but not precipitous, and overpowering rather than majestic. To the S.W. Snowdon is temporarily hidden by the little Moel Perfedd. (The mountain ascents from Pen-y-Gwryd are described in other places. For Moel Siabod see later in this chapter; for the Glyders, Ch. IX.; for Snowdon, Ch. XII.) Directly after leaving the inn, the Beddgelert road down Nant Gwynant diverges L. (Ch. XIII.). The Llanberis road winds up and round the outer slope of Moel Perfedd, with a lovely view of Nant Gwynant below, including a strip of Llyn Gwynant. As we round Moel Perfedd, Crib Goch appears, towering into a grand cone right over our heads. Y Wyddfa however reveals itself no more. In 1 m. after leaving Pen-y-Gwryd, we reach the summit of the Llanberis pass (1169 ft.) at the *Gorphwysfa Hotel*, another well-conducted inn. (For the pass see Ch. XI.)

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7. *Capel Curig to Bangor* (see Ch. IX.).

III. THE CAPEL CURIG MOUNTAINS.

1. *Pen Llithrig* (2621).—Pen Helyg and Pen Llithrig are two peaks on a lateral ridge which runs E. from the central mass of Carnedd Llewelyn, till it is abruptly stopped by the deep hollow in which Llyn Cowlyd lies. They are the only mountains of real importance, which lie E. of the main N. range. Pen Helyg is best included with the Nant Ffrancon mountains, but Pen Llithrig should be ascended from Capel Curig. It is a finely shaped mountain, which, standing in a detached position, rises steeply to a graceful cone, and shows smoother sides than most of its rugged neighbours. Take the track to Llyn Cowlyd (p. 150), and just before the descent to the lake, strike up the side of the mountain, which faces us L. The climb is a steep pull of about 1200 ft. The only point to be careful about is not to diverge too much to the R., since the slopes overhanging Llyn Cowlyd are dangerously steep. The conical top is a glorious view point. Deep at our feet is the best view of Llyn Cowlyd, with the fine crags and screes of Creigiau Gleision rising steeply from its far side. Capel Curig looks a green oasis, watched over by Moel Siabod, over whose shoulder peer Cynicht and Moelwyn. The central giants group themselves well round Llyn Ogwen. To the L. Lliwedd and Y Wyddfa appear over the long slope of Glyder Fach. Then the two Glyders and Tryfaen show a trio of peaks close together. Y Garn stands behind the lake, and on the R. the long line of the N. range begins with Braich Ddu, Carnedd Dafydd and Carnedd Llewelyn. Pen Helyg stands in front cutting off part of Llyn Ogwen with its long ridge. Then, beyond Y Foel Fras, the long summit-level dips to the lower Tal-y-Fan. In front of the range is Cwm

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Eigiau, with fine crags and a large tarn Llyn Eigiau, spoilt by industrial operations. Further off N.E. is the Conway valley, with Tal-y-Cafn bridge very plain.

The climb is best taken as an extension of the walk from Capel Curig to Trefriw (p. 150). By walking over the hills, which stretch N., and descending R., when the foot of the lake is passed, the path can easily be regained. Or Pen Helyg may be climbed by the ridge leading to it, which only involves a descent of about 600 ft., and a return made thence to Capel Curig.

2. *MOEL SIABOD* (pronounced "Shab-od," 2860).—Owing to its detached position, well to the E. of the central group, Moel Siabod attracts more attention than many other mountains of greater height. From the country round Bettws-y-Coed it stands well in front of the Snowdon group, and seems quite representative of the whole. Moreover, the greatest service of all, it supplies a graceful conical outline for the heads of both the Lledr and the Llugwy valleys. In the case of the former valley the cone is the actual top, which is at its S.W. end. The more decided cone which rises above the Llugwy valley is the N.E. end of the summit-ridge seen in profile. The E. side, overlooking the Bettws-y-Coed country, is precipitous; the W. side slopes more gently. There are few Welsh mountains better worth climbing. The *ascent* may be begun from Capel Curig, Dolwyddelan and Pen-y-Gwryd. Probably no one would think of starting from Pen-y-Gwryd, unless he was stopping at the hotel. The usual course is to climb from Capel Curig, and descend by Dolwyddelan.

(1) *From Capel Curig*.—Go past the Royal Hotel and turn L. at once, crossing a bridge over the stream, which has just left the lakes. From here a path leads

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uphill, and is soon joined by a track on the L. Just opposite a ruined cottage turn L. over a stream, pass a gate, and continue the ascent with the stream R., and some rock bosses L. After passing a small quarry, we reach the open hillside, where the path practically stops. A wire fence soon has to be crossed, in which a gate may be found somewhat to the L. Then follows a stiff climb up the shoulder to the ridge. This is a fine outcrop of rock, quite $\frac{1}{2}$ m. long, overhanging the precipices on the E. side of the mountain. In clear weather it is a splendid rambling ground; but the shortest way to the top is to keep the rocks on the L. the whole way to the cairn at the S.W. end.

(2) *From Dolwyddelan.*—Take the road up the valley for half a mile, and then enter a cart track R. When this reaches open ground, nearly opposite the Castle, turn R., and make for the foot of the mountain. Some unpleasant boggy ground has first to be crossed. Then diverge somewhat L., to avoid some crags which are conspicuous in front, and strike up the S. shoulder of the mountain. The top is plainly in view the whole way. The only possible mistake is to get too far R. among the precipices, which lie on the S.E. of the mountain.

(3) *From Pen-y-Gwryd.*—Starting from the hotel go about 150 yards along the Beddgelert road, and turn L. on to the fell. Cross the moorland in a S.E. direction to the pass Bwlch-y-Main (about 1600 ft.). At the top when the twin lakes Llyniau Diwaunedd appear below, turn up the ridge leading E., and follow it up to the cairn.

The view.—Snowdon stands up grandly, 6 m. distant, with Cwm Duli displayed and Llyn Llydaw. A strip of sea is visible over the Llanberis pass. Next to the R. is Llyn-cwm-y-Ffynnon, just above the

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Pen-y-Gwryd hotel, and below the long line of the Glyders, over which appear Y Garn and Tryfaen. Further off the long ridge on which are Carnedd Dafydd and Carnedd Llewelyn stretches away N., with the lateral ridge of Pen Helyg and Pen Llithrig intersecting it, and Ffynnon Llugwy lying in the angle between them. Far to the N. glitters Llandudno between the two Ormes Heads, and with the sea beyond. To the E. the valleys of the Llugwy and the Lledr are well displayed, but their effect is marred by the flanking hills, which from this height appear inconsiderable. In the upper part of the Lledr valley Dolwyddelan Castle is very plain. More to the L. is Llyn Conwy with the Arenigs behind. To the R. of the Lledr valley stands the Moelwyn and Cynicht group, with the tarns Llyn Conglog and Llyn Edno glittering in front. The distant view to the E. and S.E. is bounded by the Clwydian and Berwyn ranges, with the Arans and Cader Idris due S. Much nearer is the sea at Portmadoc. In front is a beautiful view of the Glaslyn valley as far as Beddgelert with Llyn y Ddinas in the centre and Moel Hebog beyond. Lastly comes Yr Aran with Y Garnedd Goch behind it, completing the panorama.

The *descents* of Moel Siabod give no trouble. For Capel Curig descend straight to the Royal Hotel, which is in view almost from the top. For Dolwyddelan descend to the Castle, keeping somewhat R. to avoid some crags on the lower slopes. The boggy ground cannot be entirely avoided. For Pen-y-Gwryd first descend W. to Bwlch-y-Main, then turn N.W. in the direction of the hotel.

(For ascents of the Glyders, Tryfaen, Carnedd Dafydd, Carnedd Llewelyn and Pen Helyg from Capel Curig see Ch. IX.)

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CHAPTER IX

NANT FFRANCON AND THE CENTRAL MOUNTAINS

I. 1. It has been already pointed out how profoundly the scenery of central Snowdonia has been modified by the two great passes which are cut clean across it. Noble in many respects as are the more Northern mountains, yet as a rule they are of a heavy character, neither steep-sided nor precipitous, and the summit-levels are merely elevated tablelands. But where the central mass of Snowdonia is deeply intersected by these gigantic trenches, it is completely broken up, and we have a succession of wild and irregularly shaped mountains, descending to the passes by precipitous slopes. Of the two valleys the most remarkable is the Nant Ffrancon. It is little more than 1000 ft. above sea-level at the highest point, and pierces mountains all over 3000 ft., and which therefore rise above it almost perpendicularly for 2000 ft. and more. And, what is still more remarkable, the summit of the pass lies on a moorland quite clear of the great mountains, and on their E. side. The pass is really the valley of the river Ogwen, which, formed by rills descending from the S.E. slopes of the mountains, turns in a general W. direction, and breaks through the whole mountain barrier, finally forcing its passage to the Menai Straits near Bangor. Whether the action of water alone is capable of having effected such a tremendous result, or whether it has been aided by some convulsion of nature, must be left for professed geologists to decide. The stream at first descends very slightly to the basin of Llyn Ogwen, a lake which

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almost entirely fills the upper part of the valley and is surrounded by the highest mountains. At the end of the lake, in the very centre of the mountain group, the valley suddenly turns sharp at a right angle, and runs almost due N. The stream, after leaving the lake, dashes down a couple of hundred feet of precipitous rock, and then flows for 4 m. through a beautiful green strath, from which the great mountains rise steeply on both sides, but more persistently to the W. Then at Bethesda the mountains cease, and the river has a further course of 5 m. among low green hills, before it reaches salt water by Penrhyn Park.

Through this remarkable pass Telford ran his great Holyhead road, from which it will best be described. The best views are gained, when we are approaching the sharp bend in the centre from either direction, about which the highest and steepest mountains are grouped.

2. *Bangor to Capel Curig* (15 m.).—Start N. along the High Street until the houses are passed. Soon after a bridge crosses the road, we turn sharp R., and continue for a mile with the wall of Penrhyn Park L., and no view. At the Park gates, where the road divides, take the right-hand branch. The hills at the entrance to Nant Ffrancon appear in front. Opposite L. is a beautiful group of mountains, including Moel Wnion, Bera Mawr, and Y Drosogl (2), with its S. projection Gyrn Wigan. In front are three rounded hills, which connect Moel Wnion with Bethesda (p. 183). The wooded valley of the Ogwen soon comes close to the road L., and is presently crossed at *Halfway Bridge*, where there is a beautiful view up the stream with Carnedd y Filiast standing grandly over it. The road now ascends among woods, with the Ogwen R., but presently, at the 4th milestone, the view opens

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again. On the L. appear Carnedd Dafydd and Carnedd Llewelyn with the conical Yr Elen in front ; on the R., a fine group consisting of Carnedd y Filiast and Elidyr Fawr, with Bronllwyd and Elidyr Fach in front. *Bethesda* is now soon reached (5 m.), a large and ugly quarrymen's village, named from its principal chapel. Though it is the gate of splendid scenery, it will not tempt many visitors to stay. Immediately S. are the extensive *Penrhyn quarries*, the final cause of the village's existence, which reach far up the slopes of Bronllwyd, the first of the Nant Ffrancon mountains, but fortunately do not penetrate into the interior of the valley.

After crossing a bridge over the Caseg, the stream from Carnedd Llewelyn, we plunge into a beautifully wooded valley, with the Ogwen murmuring below. In a mile the trees suddenly stop altogether and the real Nant Ffrancon begins. (To secure a first-rate view at this point, it is worth turning off the road to the R. a little before reaching the hamlet Tyn-y-Maes, and proceeding $\frac{1}{4}$ m. down the lane, till a very prettily situated bridge over the Ogwen is reached.)

The name Nant Ffrancon is said to mean the "valley of beavers," but this is a much disputed point. The valley bottom is flat, about $\frac{1}{2}$ m. wide, and entirely covered with rich grass, which prevents it being a valley of desolation, and contrasts admirably with the wild heights that rise all round. To the E. there is a grassy slope, which presently rises aloft to the stern precipitous front of Braich Ddu (over 3100 ft.), the end of the Carneddau range, set with huge crags which seem from some points almost to overhang. To the W. the mountains are finer and more varied. First comes Bronllwyd, scarcely more than a ridge leading up to the fine cone of Carnedd y Filiast. The summit

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of the next mountain, Moel Perfedd, is out of sight behind, but the front part forms with Carnedd y Filiast the two ends of a grand mountain mass, separated by a precipitous cwm, which is filled with a remarkable series of shelving rocks. Next comes the red cone of Y Foel Goch, rising directly and grandly from the valley. The higher peak of Y Garn is at first concealed by a serrated ridge connected with Y Foel Goch. At the end of the valley are the Glyders, flat-topped, but showing tremendous precipices on the side facing us. A fine rocky ridge runs up from the valley to the slight depression between them.

As we advance up the valley, the precipitous front of Y Foel Goch stands back further from the valley, and is seen to be flanked by two huge lower arms. Y Garn is now full in view, and shows exactly the same formation on a larger and grander scale. Presently the basin may be traced in which Llyn Idwal lies out of sight, under a cliff ridge connecting Y Garn with Glyder Fawr, in the centre of which is the black gash of the Twll Du, or Devil's Kitchen. Meanwhile the crags of Braich Ddu are towering above our heads on the L. The well-engineered road ascends gradually to the bridge over the Ogwen, below which are the Falls, out of sight. We have reached the great bend, which may be considered the head of Nant Ffrancon, though not of the Ogwen valley. As the road turns the corner, the majestic Tryfaen suddenly comes into sight close at hand, a pyramid of bare rock with three peaks something like a Prince of Wales' feather. Below at our feet and filling the entire valley between Tryfaen and Braich Ddu is Llyn Ogwen (the "lake of the white hollow") 1 m. long and 984 ft. above sea-level. The view from its foot, though pleasing, is not the best. Close by is *Ogwen Lake Cottage*, a small but

comfortable Temperance Inn, which is more completely and immediately surrounded by wild and grand mountains than any other house of entertainment in N. Wales. The road now passes between the lake and Tryfaen, and in about 1 m. emerges from the mountains, and rises a little to the true head of the pass, very little above 1000 ft. About the 11th milestone from Bangor we pass the watershed, and immediately afterwards cross the Llugwy, which descends from its source, Ffynnon Llugwy, on the L., and henceforth accompanies us (R.) the whole way to Capel Curig. We traverse a desolate upland moor, with Pen Helyg, Pen Llithrig, and Creigiau Gleision (L.), and the ridge descending from Glyder Fach (R.). The road also gradually descends, and runs into Capel Curig at the end of the ridge just mentioned. (For continuation of road to Bettws-y-Coed see p. 138.)

3. *Capel Curig to Bangor* (15 m.)—To appreciate Nant Ffrancon properly, it should be approached from Bethesda. But, on the other hand, to appreciate Llyn Ogwen and its basin, the approach should be from Capel Curig, which therefore must briefly be described.

Four miles after leaving Capel Curig we pass the watershed of the Llugwy and the Ogwen, with Carnedd Llewelyn and Carnedd Dafydd rising directly in front. We soon reach *Llyn Ogwen*, which looks its best from a rock near its head, a little R. of the road. It lies in a deep basin, almost completely surrounded by five or six of the loftiest and most rugged mountains in Snowdonia. Y Garn, with Y Foel Goch to its R., forms a splendid background, while to the L. the precipices of Glyder Fawr just appear over the ridge which leads up to the depression between the Glyders. Glyder Fach is at present concealed behind Tryfaen, which shows a fine pyramidal shape L., while facing

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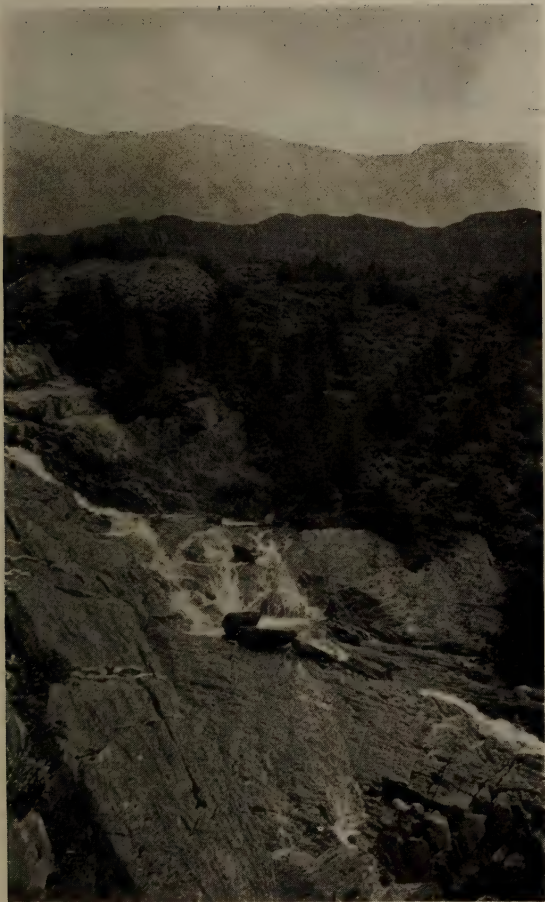
it R. is the long bulky slope of Braich Ddu. Of these six mountains five are over the 3000 ft., and all turn their steepest sides to the dark and solemn lake.

After the road has passed the lake, it turns at a right angle, and descends the Nant Ffrancon, but the view down the valley is not to be compared with the view up it (see description the reverse way).

II. Most of the interest of Nant Ffrancon lies in mountain climbing, but there are some lakes and waterfalls, which may be visited independently. Ogwen Lake Cottage is the best centre, but cyclists and strong walkers can see all that is worth seeing from Capel Curig or Bethesda.

1. *The Ogwen Falls*.—These are caused by the rapid descent of the river from the level of the lake to the strath of Nant Ffrancon, nearly 300 ft. below. From the bridge there is a delightful peep of broken water, the Ogwen and the brook from Llyn Idwal being seen to unite their waters and then dash hurriedly downwards, but the actual Falls are below out of sight. To see them take the cart track which starts from Ogwen Cottage, and descends leaving bridge and stream R. Soon after passing through a gate, turn R., and descend to the level of the stream, whence good views of the Falls are to be obtained. The principal leap is a sheer one, only slightly broken by large boulders in the bed of the stream. Below are two or three smaller cascades. There is plenty of water, and the whole is well recessed in steep rocks, the bridge standing above all. But all is bare rock; with no trees nor even grass. The cart track by which we started continues down the W. side of the valley, crossing again to the main road near Tyn-y-Maes.

2. *Llyn Idwal and Twll Du (the Devil's Kitchen)*.—This short ramble takes us to the wildest corner of the



OGWEN FALLS WITH GLYDERS BEYOND

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Nant Ffrancon scenery. Take the path starting just W. of Ogwen Cottage, which continues for $\frac{1}{4}$ m. in the direction of Tryfaen, then turns at a right angle, and heads for the hollow in which the lake lies. It is detestably rough and sloppy the whole way. Llyn Idwal is 1223 ft. above sea-level (more than 200 ft. higher than Llyn Ogwen), and at the most is $\frac{1}{2}$ m. in length; but it rests in a basin hardly to be equalled for wild grandeur. It is enclosed by an almost perfect amphitheatre of dark precipices. To the L. is the steepest side of Glyder Fawr, with the rocky ridge in front which runs down to Llyn Bochllwyd, and the deep-set savage cwm between mountain and ridge. On the R. is Y Garn, with its precipitous front and a projecting rocky point on either side. At the back of the lake the two mountains are connected by a lower line of unbroken dark cliff, in the centre of which is the Twll Du, *i.e.* Black Hole, a V-shaped gash on the top of the cliff. The horror of unnatural murder has clung for centuries to this scene of savage desolation. For here the youthful Idwal, a son of Prince Owain Gwynedd (but not known to history) is said to have been drowned by the orders, if not, as one version of the story runs, by the very hands, of his foster-father. Since then it is supposed that the lake is haunted by demons and that no bird will ever fly over its gloomy, sullen waters.

A visit to Twll Du involves a rough scramble and should not be undertaken unless the tourist has two hours to spare. First we have to go round to the far side of the lake. This may be done by turning either R. or L. The former is preferable, but both tracks are very rough and wet. Then comes a 500 ft. climb to the mouth of the chasm, first up a green bank, then by a steep and toilsome ascent over huge boulders. The

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Twll Du is a deep cleft made in the rocks by the stream issuing from the little Llyn-y-Cwn on the plateau above. When the mists boil and surge above the lake, and rise up through the cleft, it is called the Devil's Kitchen. The suggestion, however, has been made that the lake is the real kitchen, and that the cleft should rather be called the Devil's Chimney. It is a horrible fissure with sides of black rock, which rise 300 ft. perpendicularly. The mouth is choked with huge boulders, up which we can scramble a little way, but further progress soon becomes impossible except to the climbing fraternity. The climb through the ravine was first achieved in 1898. There are two pitches, the first of very moderate difficulty, but the second is perhaps the hardest and most dangerous climb in Snowdonia.

As the rest of the hillside is sheer cliff, it appears at first sight impossible to reach the top. There is, however, a safe and easy path, though somewhat of a steep scramble. On leaving the cleft turn E. in the direction of Glyder Fawr, and ascend at once, keeping the whole way on a ledge close under the sheer cliff R. Soon the ledge turns R., and leads us safely to the top. The plateau is covered with rock bosses, among which we can pick our way to the top of the chasm. The view looking down through the *Twll Du* is very strange. The rock walls are much nearer together at the top than at the bottom, and between them is a glimpse of parts of the two lakes and of the Carneddau range. The chasm can be descended some feet, until its floor becomes perpendicular.

From the plateau Glyder Fawr (p. 176) can be reached by climbing L., or Y Garn (p. 183) by climbing R. Or by walking due W. a descent may be made to Old Llanberis (see p. 203, where the walk is described in

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the reverse direction, including the descent to Llyn Idwal).

3. *Ffynnon Loer* is a tarn lying in a fine cwm high up between Carnedd Dafydd and Braich Ddu. From the road at the head of Llyn Ogwen the cwm is plainly visible due N. A little further W. on the road take a cart road leading N. to a farm, behind which climb the hillside close to a stream. The intermittent track is not of much use, but the stream is a safe guide to its source in the tarn. This is triangular in shape, and small in size, being only about $\frac{1}{4}$ m. in length. It rests in a fine circular recess about 2200 ft. above sea-level, but with the mountain rising 1000 ft. above it. Braich Ddu towers L. in a grand precipice, and Carnedd Dafydd shows a steep but not precipitous side R. From above the tarn looks insignificant, but viewed from its own level it becomes impressive.

4. *Ffynnon Llugwy*.—This beautiful tarn is interesting as the source of the river Llugwy. The climb to it from the road is however rather long and dull, and somewhat sloppy. (a) From Capel Curig take the Bangor road for $2\frac{1}{2}$ m., and turn R. into a cart track leading to the Tal-y-Braich cottages, beyond which the open hillside is gained. Go on to the L. of the long ridge of Pen Helyg in front, and skirt the hillside with the ridge to the R. and the infant Llugwy to the L., until the tarn is reached. (b) From Ogwen Cottage take the Capel Curig road until the 11th milestone from Bangor is passed. Then, before crossing the Llugwy bridge, turn L., and take a cart road leading to Glan Llugwy farm. At the farm turn R., and cross the Llugwy, then ascend the moorland without a very definite path, keeping the stream L. and Pen Helyg R., until the tarn from which the stream flows is reached. Here cross the stream and

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ascend a bank L. from which the tarn is well seen. Ffynnon Llugwy is 1786 ft. above sea-level. It is $\frac{1}{2}$ m. long, fairly circular in shape, and entirely fills the fine hollow in which it rests. At the back rises Carnedd Llewelyn. To the R. is Pen Helyg, connected with the higher mountain by a narrow craggy edge. To the L. Carnedd Llewelyn sends down a ridge called Craig Llugwy, which nearly encloses the hollow, allowing the water to escape by a narrow gap between it and Pen Helyg. Perhaps the best way of seeing the tarn is to climb Pen Helyg, as suggested in the next paragraph.

III. THE NANT FFRANCON MOUNTAINS.

1. *Pen Helyg* (2731).—Pen Llithrig and Pen Helyg form a lateral chain, dividing the upper Llugwy valley from Cwm Eigiau. The former mountain was ascended from Capel Curig, but the latter may be considered to belong to the Nant Ffrancon group. The climb starts with the cart track to the Tal-y-Braich cottages (see last paragraph), then up the long grassy arm called Braich, which leads by an easy and delightful ascent to the summit. During the climb Llyn Ogwen and its circle of mountains show their best. At the top we look down L. to the beautiful Ffynnon Llugwy, and R. into the deep gloomy hollow of Cwm Eigiau. The proximity of the range of Carnedd Llewelyn, whose cairn is in sight, cuts off the view N. and W. An interesting return to Capel Curig may be made by Pen Llithrig. But a more exhilarating continuation of the ramble is to traverse the edge separating the mountain from Carnedd Llewelyn. After descending about 500 ft., we walk along a very narrow but not dangerous edge, which presently rises again to a little eminence called Pen-y-Waen-Wen, from which there descends R. to Cwm Eigiau the splendid *Craig-yr-Ysfa*,

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now famous as a climbing ground. On the W. of it is a fine detached pinnacle 60 ft. high, the ascent of which is not considered difficult—for climbers. The route from Pen-y-Waen-Wen up Carnedd Llewelyn is obvious, a rough climb among huge rocks. Or the rambler may turn R., at the lowest part of the depression between Pen Helyg and Pen-y-Waen-Wen, and descend safely into Cwm Eigiau, gaining views of Craig-yr-Ysfa from below. By crossing the cwm, and ascending a low range in front, Melynlyn and Llyn Dulyn may be reached. This is the most interesting approach to these out-of-the-way tarns (see p. 66).

2. CARNEDD LLEWELYN (3484), CARNEDD DAFYDD (3426), *Braich Ddu* (3164).—The two great mountains, which bear the names of the brothers who fought unavailingly for their country's freedom,¹ are the highest in Wales, with the single exception of Snowdon. To Snowdon, however, they are vastly inferior, being little more than the topmost points of the mighty plateau, which forms the culmination of the mountain group stretching from Conway to Nant Ffrancon. When seen from the E., the main ridge of this group is seen to rise gradually higher, till it ends in the bulky mass of the Carneddau, the summits of which hardly top the general level. From the W., *e.g.* as seen from Bangor, the Carneddau are more effective, and show prominent rounded summits, very like each other in character, with a high connecting ridge, and sides in many places precipitous.

Carnedd Llewelyn is a bulky central mass, approached by four ridges, two of which continue the main chain, leading N.E. to Y Foel Grach and S.W. to Carnedd

¹ It is stated, however, that the mountains are really named after Llewelyn the Great, and his son Dafydd, who ruled after him (p. 25).

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Dafydd. The others lead S.E. to Pen Helyg, and N.W. to the rocky and precipitous projection of the mountain, called Yr Elen. These ridges enclose four cwms, not equal to those of Snowdon, but yet all worth notice. N. is Cwm Caseg, rough and stony, with a tiny tarn. E. is the wild Cwm Eigiau (see p. 166). S. is Cwm Llugwy with its beautiful tarn Ffynnon Llugwy. W. is *Cwm Llafair*, the largest and grandest of all, enclosed by the steep and lofty ridge running to Carnedd Dafydd, which keeps all the way a level of more than 3000 ft. The ridge starts S., but presently turns S.W. From this point it is picturesquely called the "ridge of the Black Ladders" (Cefn Ysgolion Duon), from which there descend tremendous dark precipices to the cwm below, increasing in depth and grandeur until Carnedd Dafydd is reached. On the other sides Carnedd Dafydd is steep and rough, but not precipitous. The range is continued by the projection Braich Ddu, which for another mile hardly diminishes in height or bulk, till it suddenly tumbles over in craggy precipices into Nant Ffrancon.

The ascent of Carnedd Llewelyn is best taken as the climax of a day's mountain ramble from Conway, Penmaenmawr or Aber (see especially p. 95), and we have only to add the shorter ascents from Capel Curig, Nant Ffrancon, and Bethesda.

Ascents of Carnedd Dafydd. (a) *From Nant Ffrancon by Braich Ddu.*—The climb commences by the grassy ridge which forms most of the E. side of Nant Ffrancon. If the start is from Bethesda, keep the road up Nant Ffrancon as far as Tyn-y-Maes, and then climb L. to the ridge. If from Ogwen Cottage, descend the valley for $1\frac{1}{2}$ m. until the crags on Braich Ddu are passed, and then climb the green slope without a path. From the top of the ridge the

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mountains on the far side of Nant Ffrancon are well seen, with the cone of Elidyr Fawr rising beyond them. On the ridge will be found a wall. Turn R. and follow it until it stops, then continue the steep ascent in the same direction. If the tourist is in a hurry to reach Carnedd Dafydd, he should bend L., but it is worth while to bend R. to the well-built cairn on *Braich Ddu* (3164). To get the full view we must descend some way R. beyond the cairn, to the top of the steep broken slope which descends to the head of Nant Ffrancon. Right below are the three lakes of Ogwen, Idwal, and Bochllwyd, guarded by the formidable ring of precipices of Tryfaen, the Glyders, and Y Garn. Snowdon completes the wonderful picture by filling up the gap over the Devil's Kitchen. The route to Carnedd Dafydd is backward along the ridge. *En route* there is passed R. the depression where Ffynnon Loer lies, which looks insignificant from above; then a subsidiary height, with an enormous ancient cairn, is passed. The final climb to Carnedd Dafydd is quite easy. There are three cairns on the top.

(b) *From Ogwen Cottage* the *shortest* route is by Ffynnon Loer (p. 165). The climb to the R. from the tarn is steep and toilsome, over scree and loose stones, but not dangerous.

(c) *From Capel Curig* take the Bangor road till just after the bridge over the Llugwy. Then turn R. to Glan Llugwy farm, but, just before reaching it, turn L. on to the ridge, and climb straight forward to the top of Craig Llugwy, whence the ridge between the two Carneddau may easily be reached, and either mountain climbed.

Carnedd Dafydd to Carnedd Llewelyn.—This ramble will take the best part of an hour, though the descent and ascent are trifling. We start by the ridge of the

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Black Ladders, where the comparatively rocky L. side should be taken, to see the magnificent precipices descending to the depths of Cwm Llafair. Later on the ridge turns L., and narrows to the passage called the Saddle, but without descending beneath the 3000 ft. line. Ffynnon Llugwy is now visible far below R. The final ascent to Carnedd Llewelyn is less than 500 ft.

Ascents of Carnedd Llewelyn. (a) *From Ogwen Cottage or Capel Curig.*—The shortest route is that already described by Glan Llugwy (p. 169); but a far more interesting one is that by Pen Helyg (p. 166).

(b) *From Bethesda by the Caseg valley.*—The main difficulty in starting a walk from Bethesda is to get clear of Bethesda itself, which is a bewildering maze of streets, lanes, and paths. On the main road just short of the 5th milestone and the Caseg bridge, turn L. At the top of a short road turn *sharp* R. through an iron gate into a path, which soon turns L. through another iron gate, and leads beside the Caseg to a pretty bridge. Do not cross the bridge, but take the middle one of the three pathways opposite. This ascends to the far end of a field, and still ascending, passes into a second field, after which there is a row of cottages R. (Gwernydd). At the cross roads a little further, go straight on, and follow the twisting lane until a stone step stile leads into the open fields. At first there is a fairly marked track, but, when this descends to the side of the Caseg stream, it practically stops, and the river itself has to be our guide for three dreary miles. Yr Elen and the Carneddau rise nobly on the R., but the valley is desolate and featureless. At last some sheep pens are reached at the entrance to *Cwm Caseg*, of which there is a grand view, the precipices of Yr Elen guarding the narrow entrance, and the bold front of Carnedd Llewelyn rising behind.

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It is best not to enter the cwm, but to turn more L. up the little valley of the Afon Wen, and then climb round the smooth grassy back of Clogwyn-yr-Helwyn (a projection of Y Foel Grach), which now lies between us and Cwm Caseg. Aim at the point in front where the two mountains join, and a path will be struck, which will take us along the side of Y Foel Grach, without further ascending, until we reach the depression between that mountain and Carnedd Llewelyn. A steep pull up the rocky side finally lands us on the cairn. From the path along Y Foel Grach, Yr Elen and Cwm Caseg look their best.

(c) *From Bethesda by Y Drosogl*.—This is a long day's mountain ramble ending up with the Carneddau. Instead of going up the Caseg valley, we go all round it on the mountain tops, and finally descend to the Nant Ffrancon. Start as in the last route, but when the step-stile into the fields is reached, avoid it, and keep to the lane, until it enters the open hillside. Here leave it and climb diagonally L., first to Gyrn Wigan (2002), and then on to Y Drosogl (2483). Here the route from Aber is struck (p. 95).

View from Carnedd Llewelyn.—This is far inferior to that from Snowdon, since from the broad flat top none of the cwms are in view, so that there is no effective foreground. To the N. all the nearer heights are in view as far as Llwydmor and Y Foel Fras, with Tal-y-Fan (R.) and the lower Conway valley. S.E. is the upper part of the Llugwy valley, with its bounding summits. Further off E. and S.E., on the horizon line, are the Denbigh hills, the Berwyns, the Arans with Arenig nearer, and Cader Idris. On the S. the view is obstructed by the finely grouped mountains which rise near at hand, *i.e.* Moel Siabod, Tryfaen looking its best, the precipitous Glyders with Snowdon

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beyond, Y Garn, Y Foel Goch, and the other Nant Ffrancon heights, with the cone of Elidyr just behind. W. is the usual extensive view over the flatter country and the sea. No lakes are in view. From Carnedd Dafydd the view is essentially the same.

Descents. (a) Carnedd Llewelyn to Bethesda.—A descent from Yr Elen had better not be attempted. There is indeed a steep way down L. into the Llafair valley, starting from the *col* between Carnedd Llewelyn and Yr Elen, but the better route is to descend to the ridge leading to Y Foel Grach, where take a path which skirts the L. side of Y Foel Grach without further ascending; then, leaving the path, descend L. by the grassy N. side of Glogwyn-yr-Helwyn to Afon Wen, the stream below. When this stream joins Afon Caseg near some sheep pens, follow the Caseg stream downward for 3 m. At last the intermittent path grows more definite, and passes by three or four stepstiles into a lane. When Bethesda is reached, remember to *descend* every time there is a choice of routes and not to cross the Caseg.

(b) Carnedd Llewelyn to Capel Curig by Pen Helyg.—The start requires care, and is very rough. Descend E. and presently turn S.E., carefully keeping Cwm Eigiau on the L., until the narrow ridge leading to Pen Helyg is reached. All is now plain. (For the rest see p. 166.) (*N.B.*—This route had better not be attempted late in the evening or in mist.)

(c) A shorter route to Capel Curig or Ogwen Cottage.—Descend to the ridge between the Carneddau, and about halfway to Carnedd Dafydd strike off S.E. on to the ridge Craig Llugwy. Descend this due S. to Glan Llugwy, a farm from which a cart track joins the road about $3\frac{1}{2}$ m. from Capel Curig, and 2 m. from Ogwen Cottage.

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(d) *Carnedd Dafydd to Ogwen Cottage*.—Descend the steep S. side (a rather severe scramble) until Ffynnon Loer is reached, then follow the issuing stream to a farm near the head of Llyn Ogwen.

(e) *Carnedd Dafydd to Bethesda by Braich Ddu*.—Remember that Braich Ddu ends in precipitous crags. Before reaching these turn R., and descend the ridge leading in the direction of Bethesda. After the crags are passed, we can descend to the Nant Ffrancon almost at any point we please, where the road leading to Bethesda will be struck.

3. *The Glyders*—GLYDER FAWR (3279), GLYDER FACH (3262).—These heights are the summits of the third highest mountain mass in Snowdonia, and lie between the two highest masses, the Carneddau range to the N. on the far side of Nant Ffrancon, and Snowdon S. on the far side of the Llanberis Pass. Together with Tryfaen the Glyders cover an enormous area, including the whole angle between the roads diverging at Capel Curig, as far as the head of Nant Ffrancon and the foot of the Llanberis Pass respectively. The ridge which starts at Capel Curig lifts itself gradually upward, the first height being Cefn-y-Capel, the next Gallt-y-Gogo. Then comes a further lift to Glyder Fach, a mountain with steep precipitous sides and flat narrow top, to which an individuality is given by the tremendous piles of enormous boulders with which it is strewn. It is indeed the roughest mountain in all England and Wales, Scawfell being a bad second. At the W. end there is a very slight depression, and a rise to Glyder Fawr, also with a flat top, which rises very little above the general level. S.W. of the cairn the mountain descends a little, and then broadens out into a huge upland plateau called Esgair Felyn, sloping at first gradually, rather like an inclined plane, till

it reaches the Llanberis Pass, to which it descends nearly 2000 ft. in tremendous precipices. Thus the mountain may be said to have three faces, that facing the Llanberis Pass, that facing Nant Ffrancon, which is also a row of most impressive precipices, broken only in the centre by Y Gribin, the rugged ridge that runs up from Llyn Bochlwyd, and thirdly that facing Pen-y-Gwryd, which is steep and impressive without being precipitous.

Ascents. (a) *From Capel Curig by the ridge.*—This is perhaps the most artistic ascent. In the angle between the diverging roads at Capel Curig take a track which crosses the Llugwy to a farm called Gelli and climb W. The first height passed is Cefn-y-Capel (about 1500), then comes the bulky Gallt-y-Gogo (2499) of which the chief speciality is that it has a view of the very retiring Llyn Cowlyd. The ridge now falls a little to a slight depression, a marshy tract with a small tarn, at the foot of Glyder Fach, where (b) is joined.

(b) *From Nant-y-Gwryd.*—On the whole this is a less laborious route. From Capel Curig keep on the Llanberis road for about $1\frac{3}{4}$ m. When the lakes are passed, and also a farm called Dyffryn Mymbyr, strike up the hillside R. without any track, in a sloping direction, and cross two walls. Be careful not to diverge too much R., the object not being to scale the ridge of Gallt-y-Gogo, but to reach the marshy depression between it and Glyder Fach. This gives a splendid view R. down the wild Cwm Tryfaen, with Tryfaen itself rising close at hand.

Here routes (a) and (b) join. From the depression the climb to *Glyder Fach* is very steep and rough. At first some white direction cairns enable us to pick our way, then we bend somewhat close to the edge of the precipice R., and so reach the summit level. This



THE GLYDERS FROM ABOVE CWM GLAS

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is flat, but for the chaotic piles of tremendous boulders which are strewn wildly about. Above the general level rise three remarkable pyramids of piled rocks, to which no description can do justice. Many of the rock slabs are long and sharp, and stick up, like needles or spears, at all sorts of fantastic angles. The first pile, which is now close to us, is usually taken as the cairn, but the three are nearly of a height and, the latest ordnance map is silent on the point. The ascent of the pile is itself somewhat of a climb. The view is much the same as that to be described from Glyder Fawr. Continuing the ramble W. we soon come to the second rock pyramid, where the needle formation is still more prominent. The ridge being narrow here, we have to clamber over the obstruction as best we may. Then come more big boulders, and a splendid view down the precipices R. to Llyn Boch-lwyd. The third rock pyramid, quite at the end of the mountain, is the finest of all, and dubbed *Castell-y-Gwynt*. It can be avoided by passing to the S., after which the depression between the two Glyders is soon reached. The walking now improves a little, and we make fairly good tracks to the cairn on Glyder Fawr, a long $\frac{1}{2}$ m. distant. *En route* there are fine views down the precipices R. to Llyn Idwal.

(c) *From Pen-y-Gwryd*.—From the inn the cairn on Glyder Fawr and the three rock pyramids on Glyder Fach are all distinctly seen. To reach *Glyder Fach* do not attempt the rough gully which separates the two mountains, but descend the Capel Curig road till past the bridge, then strike straight up the hillside beside a wall. When this bends, incline R., and follow a line of small cairns to the E. end of the summit level, bending again a little L. near the top. *For Glyder Fawr* start a little on the Llanberis side of the inn,

and climb R., keeping the little Moel Perfedd (L.) till Llyn Cwm-y-Ffynnon appears in front. This must also be kept on the L., and the stream crossed where it leaves the tarn. Climb the steep ridge of Glyder Fawr, which is straight ahead, bending a little R. at the top till the cairn is reached.

(d) *From Ogwen Cottage direct.*—This is by the narrow and steep ridge Y Gribin, separating the hollows in which lie Llyn Idwal and Llyn Bochlwyd. It is a most interesting and exhilarating ascent, but should only be taken in clear weather. From Ogwen Cottage start by the path to Llyn Idwal, but in $\frac{1}{4}$ m., where it turns R., go straight on, and make for the foaming torrent in front from Llyn Bochlwyd. Climb to the R. of the stream, and turn R. on to the ridge just before *Llyn Bochlwyd* appears. This tarn is not large, but rests in a splendid recess 1806 ft. above sea-level, surrounded by Tryfaen, Glyder Fach, and the ridge we are about to climb. As we ascend the ridge, Llyn Idwal and Llyn Ogwen soon appear, and the views R. down the steep precipices to Llyn Idwal are very impressive. For a time the ridge is smooth and grassy, but presently the upper part rises steeply in front and looks formidable. A rough path, however, will be found the whole way a little to the R. (*i.e.* on the Llyn Idwal side), by which it can be climbed in safety, though there are precipices not far off on both sides. At the top Glyder Fawr is R. and Glyder Fach L. (see p. 175).

(e) *From Ogwen Cottage by Twll Du.*—Ascend to the plateau above Twll Du (see p. 164), and when near the foot of Llyn-y-Cwn ("the hounds' lake"), turn L., and climb steeply about 1000 ft. over rough ground to the cairn.

(f) *From Llanberis.*—Take the route to the Llyn-y-

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Cwn plateau (see p. 203), and ascend as in last paragraph.

View from Glyder Fawr.—This is one of the finest in Snowdonia, the number of valleys visible close at hand being unusual. In all there are four valley-views, separated by mountain groups, and forming gateways, through which the far-off country can be seen. N.E. is the upper Ogwen valley, between Glyder Fach and Tryfaen (R.), and the Carneddau range L., and backed by Pen Helyg and Pen Llithrig. Llyn Ogwen itself is not in view. In the far distance are the Denbighshire mountains and the sea close to Rhyl. About N. is a splendid full length view of Nant Ffrancon with the mountains bounding it on the W., all standing nearly in a line behind Y Garn. Beyond in the distance are Penrhyn Castle, the Menai Straits, with Bangor and Beaumaris, Anglesey, and the sea. Further W. is the Llanberis valley, with both Llyn Peris and Llyn Padarn. Beyond are Carnarvon and its Castle, another stretch of the Straits, and Holyhead in the far distance. On the R. of Llanberis stands up Elidyr Fawr; on the L., a little further off, are Moel Eilio, Y Garnedd Goch, and Mynydd Mawr, with the Nantlle Pass and the Rivals in the far distance. Nearly S. is a stretch of Nant Gwynant, but without the lake. L. of it are Moel Siabod, Cynicht, and Moelwyn, while in the distance are Traeth Mawr and the sea beyond Harlech. Snowdon stands up right opposite S.W. with all its peaks and Llyn Llydaw visible. Over Crib Goch appear Yr Aran and Moel Hebog. To the S.E. there is an uninterrupted view of the far distant mountains, the Berwyns, the Arans, Arenig, and Cader Idris.

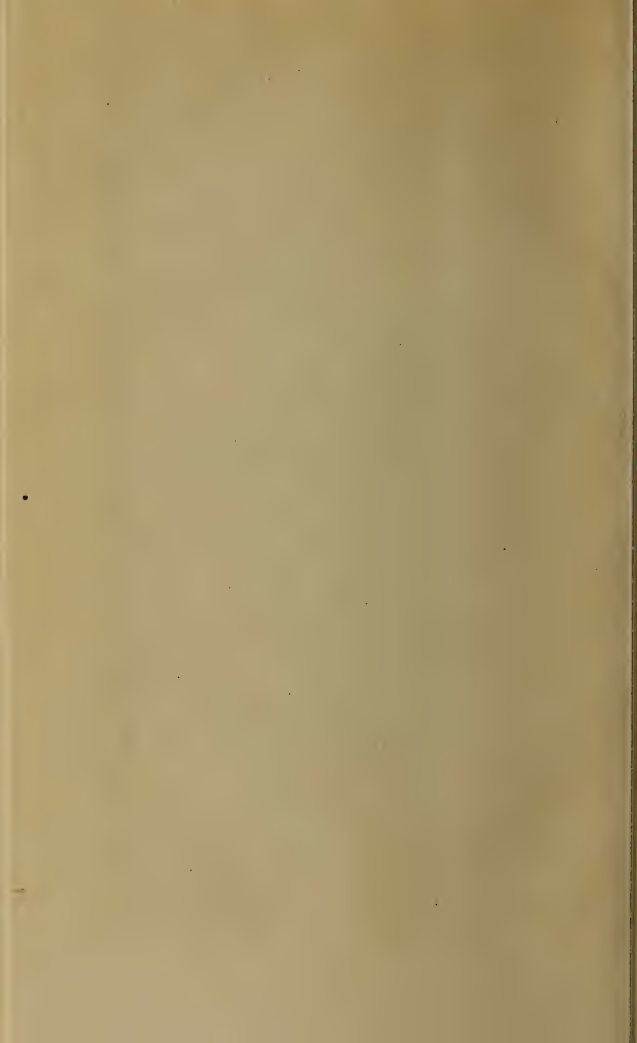
Descents from Glyder Fawr. (a) To Capel Curig.—Stick to the ridge past Glyder Fach (p. 174) all the way

down. If you get tired of it, a descent can be made at any time R. into the Nant-y-Gwryd road. (b) *To Pen-y-Gwryd*.—The inn is visible below, but the direct descent is very steep and leads to marshy ground. Bear first some way S. along the ridge, then turn a little L. and descend to the L. side of Llyn Cwm-y-Ffynnon. After passing the lake, bend a little R., and descend to the road. (c) *To Ogwen Cottage*.—The best descent is by Y Gribin, which strikes off directly at the depression between the two mountains, and descends between the hollows of Idwal and Bochlwyd. Its commencement should be most carefully observed, and the route should not be taken in misty weather. Another route also requiring care is to descend the rough N. slope to the foot of Llyn-y-Cwn, and then continue by the Twll Du route (see p. 164). This is the route by which Kingsley's half-mad poet Elsley descended the mountain after climbing from Pen-y-Gwryd and spending the night in a storm on the top. The scenery of Kingsley's high-wrought description really applies to Glyder Fach far better than to Glyder Fawr (see "Two Years Ago," ch. xxi.). (d) *To Llanberis*.—Descend to the foot of Llyn-y-Cwn, and then continue the descent due W. to old Llanberis (p. 203).

4. TRYFAEN (3010) has been mentioned several times as one of the most remarkable features of the extraordinary Nant Ffrancon scenery. It is completely detached, but for the ridge which connects it with the most precipitous side of Glyder Fach, and lifts 2000 ft. of bare pyramidal crag above Llyn Ogwen. Steep as it is on the W., the E. side, which runs down to Cwm Tryfaen, shows an even more precipitous face. Between these sides is merely one narrow razor-like arête, running up from the N. end to the summit. It

TRYFAEN FROM LLYN OGWEN





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is remarkable that so high a mountain should cover so comparatively small an area. The name is derived from the triple summit, in shape like a gigantic trefoil, which it turns towards Nant Ffrancon. From the upper part of the Llugwy valley the foliations appear four rather than three, and points can be found to the N., whence the mountain appears as a gigantic obelisk, with one sharp point "impaling the sky." The inaccessibility of Tryfaen has been exaggerated. There are indeed plenty of precipices and steep crags for the scientific climbers to conquer, but there are at least two routes, and quite possibly others, by which the summit can be safely reached after a certain amount of scrambling. Nevertheless majestic Tryfaen deserves to be treated with all respect, and rashness might easily get the inexperienced climber into trouble.

Ascents. (a) *From Ogwen Cottage.*—Looking at the mountain from below, notice a rocky projection on the ridge between Tryfaen and the Glyders. This may fancifully be called "the thumb" corresponding to the three or four "fingers" which represent the summits. The point to aim at is the slight depression between the thumb and the fingers. Start by the path to Llyn Idwal, but in $\frac{1}{4}$ m., where it turns R., continue straight on to the point where the stream from Llyn Bochlwyd foams down the rocks in front. Ascend by a steep grass slope a little L. of the stream. When the tarn appears, turn a little L., and clamber up to the depression just L. of the thumb. To the L. there are awkward looking rocks, and to the R. a sort of crag wall, but the climb straight ahead, though steep, is not difficult. A little before reaching the ridge, turn L., and scramble across the huge boulders to the top of the first finger, then to that of the middle

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finger, which is the highest point. Between it and the third finger there is an awkward-looking cleft. The actual top consists of two curious upright stones, which from below have sometimes been mistaken for two men looking at the scenery. Directly below on the E. side there is sheer precipice, but on the W. there is quite a small plateau before the descent begins.

(b) *From Capel Curig*.—The tourist may prefer to walk or ride to Ogwen Cottage, and ascend as above, but the following alternative route is shorter, and has strong points of interest. After walking $3\frac{1}{2}$ m. along the Bangor road turn L., soon after the 11th milestone, and climb into Cwm Tryfaen, otherwise Nant Gwern-y-Gof, a wild and impressive ravine, with the most precipitous side of Tryfaen R., and the equally precipitous Glyder Fach in front. Keep to the R. but do not climb, till all the precipices which descend from the fingers are passed. Then turn R., and climb steeply over heather and whortleberries to the depression between the fingers and the thumb (see last paragraph). From this point climb to the top as in (a), keeping slightly to the W. of the ridge.

(c) *From Pen-y-Gwryd*.—Climb Glyder Fach (p. 175) to the far side overlooking Cwm Tryfaen. Take down the screes on the R. side a few hundred feet, then turn L., and skirt the screes below the precipices, until you reach the ridge leading to Tryfaen, which has a wall running plainly along it. Proceed N. along the ridge, and climb to the summit as before. This is only a fine weather route.

N.B.—The writer has not climbed this way, but has been assured by visitors at the Pen-y-Gwryd Inn that it is both safe and practicable. Mr Abraham ("Rock Climbing in N. Wales") recommends both the ascent

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of Tryfaen by the central ridge, and the ascent of Glyder Fach by the ridge starting from the thumb, as safe and easy climbs for the tyro, who is finding his mountain legs. However he allows that these routes have to be treated "with due respect," so that they seem really to be climbs, not merely safe scrambles, and thus are not to be recommended to the general public.

The view is chiefly of the valley below, but, though limited, it is very effective. The three tarns, Ogwen, Idwal, and Bochlwyd, at different levels and of different colours, rest grandly in the arms of the Glyders, Y Garn and the Carneddau range. High up in the recesses of the latter are two other tarns, Ffynnon Loer and Ffynnon Llugwy. To the E. only is the view unobstructed, reaching to distant ranges of Moel Fammau and the Berwys.

To *descend* return to the depression N. of the thumb, whence we can take straight down either E. into Cwm Tryfaen, and so back into the Capel Curig road, or W. to Llyn Bochlwyd, and Ogwen Cottage.

5. *The Mountains W. of Nant Ffrancon.* Bronllwyd (1628), *Carnedd y Filiast* (2694), *Moel Perfedd* (2750). *Y FOEL GOCH* (2726), *Y GARN* (3104).

For views of Nant Ffrancon itself and all the great mountains of Snowdonia nothing can be finer than a walk starting from Bethesda along the summits of these lofty mountains, and ending by a descent to Ogwen Cottage or Llanberis. Since the ascent of Bronllwyd passes through the Penrhyn quarries, and the mountain is merely an upward-sloping ridge, it is best to omit it, and begin the climb by ascending *Carnedd y Filiast* ("the height of the young female greyhound") by means of Cwm Ceunant. Keep on the Nant Ffrancon road for $1\frac{1}{2}$ m., until a cart road diverges

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R., just before Tyn y Maes. This crosses the Ogwen, and ascends the far side of the valley. In about $\frac{1}{3}$ m. the stream from Cwm Ceunant is crossed. Directly afterwards when a gate is passed, go through a step-stile R. leading to the cwm. Climb continuously with no path, keeping the stream R. till the upper part of the cwm is revealed, between Bronllwyd (R.) and Carnedd y Filiast (L.). Ascend the steep shoulder of the latter mountain by a rough track a little R. of the ridge, which leads safely between the precipices R. and L. This is however not a walk for misty weather. The fine conical top is a glorious view-point. On the W. spread just below us is the flat country with the sea and the Straits stretching from Carnarvon to Beaumaris. In all other directions are the chief giants of Snowdonia magnificently displayed. Note the cone of Elidyr Fawr close at hand, with the Marchllyn tarn in front. Directly we leave the cairn we have Cwm Graianog (L.), a hollow filled with a tremendous downward sweep of smooth rock, grooved and polished by glacial action, and set at a slope of about 50° . We now reach the summit of *Moel Perfedd*, which stands back from the precipices overhanging Nant Ffrancon. The name "central mountain" suits its position, as it is about equidistant from Carnedd y Filiast, Elidyr Fawr, and Y Foel Goch (for the Elidyr's see p. 204). Our route now crosses a depression of about 400 ft., and ascends to *Y Foel Goch*, which sinks to the Llanberis valley by a long grassy slope, separated from Elidyr Fawr by the pretty Dudodyn valley, but drops sharply to Nant Ffrancon by steep precipices. From the red conical top, which seems almost to overhang the valley, is obtained, in the writer's judgment, the finest view of Nant Ffrancon from above, displaying fully all its tarns and precipices. Still proceeding S. we

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reach the higher summit of *Y Garn*, a mountain built on the same plan as *Y Foel Goch*, but on a grander scale. Here again is another splendid prospect, remarkable both for the near view of the Glyder precipices and of Snowdon, and also for the large number of tarns in view, including especially splendid *Llyn Idwal* just below, and both of the *Llanberis* lakes. A descent may be made to the plateau above *Twll Du*, whence either *Ogwen Cottage* or *Old Llanberis* may be reached. Another way of ascending these mountains is by the depression between *Moel Perfedd* and *Y Foel Goch* (pp. 164, 203).

6. *Bethesda to Aber by Moel Wnion* (6 m.) (For reverse way see p. 96.)—As usual, the difficulty is to get out of *Bethesda*. Walk up the main street leading S.E. Just before reaching the church L., a prominent chapel is seen L. Take the second of the paths leading to it, and then turn slightly R., into a path which winds upward with the church R. When a lane crosses, turn a few steps R., and then continue the upward path. Soon we reach a place where four roads meet. Again turn a few steps R., and the path still ascends, to the *Welsh Calvinistic Chapel*, where turn R. round the chapel, and continue the ascent. The lane rapidly clears the houses, and reaches the hillside with *Moel Faban* just in front. The valley we are in is called *Ffrydlas*, and the bounding height on the far side is *Gyrn Wigan*, the spur of *Y Drosogl* (2). Our most interesting route is to climb the three little heights which bound the valley N.W. About 10 min. climb leads to the first, *Moel Faban* (1339), which is rather rocky on the top. Between it and the next hill *Llefn* is a curious deep-set trench with steep grassy sides, which allows of a view from the valley towards the *Menai Straits*. *Llefn* (1450) is a green rounded

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hill. The third hill, *Gyrn* (1777), is far finer, being conical with a craggy top, from which all the Aber mountains come into view. For Moel Wnion (1902) descend N., and climb a grassy slope in the same direction to the cairn. (For description, view, and descent to Aber see p. 96, 97.)

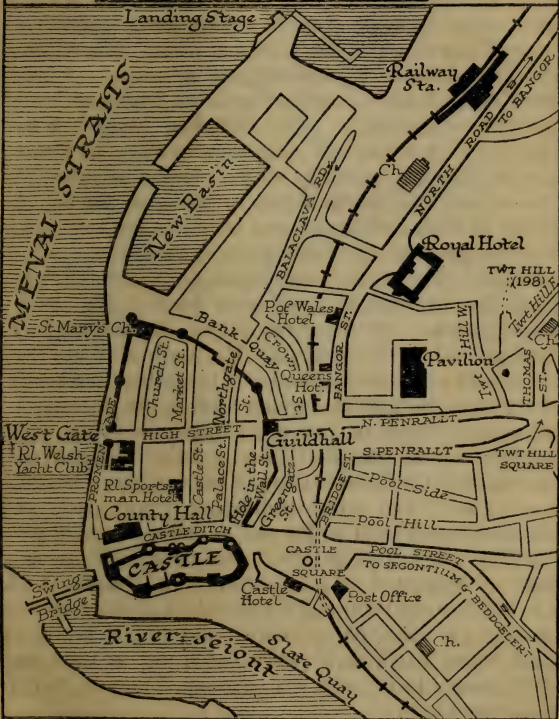
CHAPTER X

CARNARVON

[*Approaches*—From Bangor (rail, road, and steamer), p. 109 ; from Llanberis (rail and road), p. 193 ; from Beddgelert (rail and road), pp. 193, 243.]

I. 1. CARNARVON, the county town, is situated at the mouth of the little river Seiont or Saint, on the Menai Straits, and not far from their S. exit. There is no such doubt about the meaning of the name as in the case of Bangor, for it means “the fortress in Arfon” (the district of Snowdonia which is opposite to Mon., *i.e.* Anglesey). The historical interest of the place is very great. Here, or more exactly, $\frac{1}{2}$ m. inland from the present seaport, was the Roman station of *Segontium*, to which a Roman road led from Chester by the Bwlch-y-Ddeufaen (p. 91). Since the Roman coins found on the site begin with those of Vespasian, it was probably founded in the first century, and may even be due to Agricola. The site soon became famous in legend. It was the home of the mythical Welsh princess Elen or Helen, wife of the Emperor Maximus, who gave her name to the Roman road (p. 135), and to whose son Publicius the original parish church of Llanbeblig was dedicated. In some stories she is

$\frac{1}{4}$ Mile



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strangely confused with St Helena, mother of Constantine the Great, and one legend states that Constantine himself was buried at Carnarvon. Returning to sober history, we hear that Hugh Lupus built a castle here, as at Bangor, both of which were entirely destroyed in a rising of the Welsh in 1094. The site was also one of the royal residences of the princes of Gwynedd, and we find Llewelyn the Great dating a charter "at Kaerinarvon," 15th October 1221. When Edward I. came here as conqueror in 1283, he formed a new English borough in the angle between the Straits and the Seiont estuary, built for its defence a ring of walls and the largest of his castles, and made it the capital of the lately-formed county of Carnarvonshire. The next year (April 25th, 1284) his ill-fated son Edward II. was born here in the newly-erected castle. All the current stories of his birth have been proved to be fictitious. His birth in Wales was not due to any deep-laid policy of his father, but simply to accident, his parents having been in the principality the greater part of the preceding two years. The tradition of his presentation as a baby to the Welsh chieftains at the Queen's Gate of the castle is "entirely apocryphal," and with it disappears the celebrated witticism attributed to Edward I., that he would give the Welsh a native prince "who could not speak a word of English." As a matter of fact Edward II. was not created Prince of Wales till 1301, when he was already 17 years old. Finally the Eagle Tower, a small room in which is still pointed out as the scene of Edward's birth, was not finished till 1317, thirty-three years later.

In 1294 the Welsh rebelled under their leader Madoc. They besieged and stormed Carnarvon, hung the Governor, and destroyed most of the newly-erected

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castle. Edward had to hurry to Wales with an army he intended for the invasion of France ; and was for some time himself in a dangerous position at Conway (p. 52), till he was saved by the complete defeat of the Welsh insurgents. During the 14th cent. Carnarvon remained peaceful and became prosperous, until the next danger came in 1401 with the rebellion of Owain Glyndwr, who besieged the town twice unsuccessfully. Both Henry IV. and Henry V. (when Prince of Wales) were here for a short time when pursuing Owain Glyndwr. In Henry VIII.'s time an Act of Union was passed, and representatives were sent to Parliament from Wales for the first time. John Puleston accordingly attended the Parliament of 1541 as the first representative of Carnarvon boroughs. In the Great Civil War Carnarvon was fortified for the King, but was finally conquered for the Parliament by General Mytton on June 5th, 1646. In 1648 Sir John Owen again rose in insurrection for Charles I., defeated Mytton and besieged Carnarvon, but on the approach of a relieving force, he marched to meet it, and was defeated and taken prisoner near Llandegai. After this the record of the town has been of its quiet growth as a seaport and a market.

2. The situation of the town, between the Straits and the Seiont estuary, is certainly well chosen, and every view which includes the castle and the walls is magnificently effective ; but yet the general surroundings have been correctly described as pretty rather than beautiful. The Straits are here a mile wide, and the further bank is flat and not particularly well wooded. The Seiont estuary is about $\frac{1}{2}$ m. long and forms at high tide an effective and beautiful harbour with woods on the far side. Yet it seems a little irrelevant as the mouth of the turbulent little

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stream, which rushes from the Llanberis lakes. The mountains rise grandly at a distance of about 4 m., but they are not seen from the streets of the town, for it is built quite at the sea-level, and the interval is filled by rolling hills of 300 or 400 ft., insignificant in themselves, yet tending to obscure the view. Therefore the best thing the visitor can do first of all is to ascend *Twt Hill*, from which the full beauty and grandeur of the situation can be grasped. Twt Hill is a steep little crag of bare pre-Cambrian rock, about 200 ft. high, which pokes up among the houses in the N. part of the town. The climb takes about 10 min. It is conveniently reached from the road leading S. from the station, by turning into a path L., directly the Royal Hotel is passed. Presently we mount some steps, turn first R. and then L., and the rest of the ascent is obvious. From the centre of the town it is shorter to go W. along *N. Penrallt* and then turn R., up Twt Hill West. From the top there is a charming view over town, castle, and harbour, with the broad Straits and Anglesey beyond. The building just below called the Pavilion is said to be the largest public hall in Wales. To the E. rise the mountains. The nearest mountain, Moel Eilio, exactly conceals Y Wyddfa, the top of Snowdon, but Crib y Ddysgl is seen just to the L. Proceeding N. from Moel Eilio there is first a low shapeless hill of about 1400 ft. in front, called Moel Ddu. Then in order come Glyder Fawr, Y Garn, Elidyr Fawr, Carnedd y Filiast, and Bronllwyd, with Carnedd Dafydd filling up the gap between the two last. The other mountains are more crowded together, *i.e.* Carnedd Llewelyn, Yr Arryg, Y Foel Fras, Tal-y-Fan, and finally Penmaen Mawr and Penmaen Bach. To the R. of Moel Eilio is the Gwyrfai valley, with Yr Aran behind. Then come

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Mynydd Mawr and the long range of Y Garnedd Goch ; then a big gap, and finally two groups of conical hills, first Bwlch-y-Mor and the Garns, then the Rivals, which show three peaks and come quite close to the Straits. On an isolated point of Twt Hill is a monument to the Carnarvonshire men who were killed in the Boer War.

3. Descending from Twt Hill we now make our way to the *Castle*. The leading points in its history have already been mentioned. It was begun in 1283, and is stated to have been finished within the year. This can only mean that a small portion of the castle, sufficient for defence, was hurriedly built. How much was built by 1294 is uncertain, but most of it disappeared in the rebellion of that year. Of its subsequent rebuilding we have abundant details, showing that it was mainly built in Edward II.'s reign, and not finished till 1322. The statue of Edward I. over the main or King's Gate was placed in 1320. The face has been mutilated, and some authorities think it really represents Edward II. In Henry VIII.'s reign the castle was much dilapidated and partly restored. After the Civil War in 1660 an order was given for its demolition, but fortunately the external circuit was not touched. The castle belongs to the Crown, and is kept in thorough repair. The architect was Henry de Elreton, and the style resembles that of Conway Castle. Both castles show the beautiful and peculiar feature of slender angle turrets rising from the battlements of the larger towers. In beauty Conway Castle is the superior, but Carnarvon Castle, while but little inferior in this respect, surpasses most castles in impressive majesty. The great view is of the long S. front facing the estuary, but the views on the town side are also very grand. The three most strik-

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ing features are the Eagle Tower on the W., and the two great entrances, *i.e.* King's Gate (N.) and Queen Eleanor's Gate (E.). Beside the two gateways there are in all seven towers, showing considerable variety of shape but mostly octagonal. Notice in the walls the beautiful effect of the bands of red sandstone, crossing the lighter coloured limestone. The area enclosed is three acres, but the castle is very long for its breadth. On the N. side are several two-light Geometrical windows with transoms, and there are others in the Eagle Tower ; but on the S. side the windows are all arrow slits.

The entrance (charge 4d.) is through the *King's Gate*, where note the statue of Edward I. (?), the flanking turrets, the windows, and the portcullis grooves. Inside the effect is disappointing. The castle is discovered to be a mere shell, all the interior buildings having disappeared. There are few features of interest, and the exploration of numerous staircases, galleries, and battlements, all in excellent repair and showing similar features, soon grows monotonous. Also there are no seats, a grievous want. We can, however, imagine how grand the interior would be at an Eisteddfod, or at such a function as the Investiture of the present Prince of Wales in 1911. On the R. of the entrance is the inner bailey, the W. part of the castle, surrounded by four towers. On the N. is the Water Tower, in the basement of which is the castle well. At the W. end is the splendid *Eagle Tower*, crowned by three beautiful angle turrets. In the basement is the Water Gate. In the story above is the very small room to which a local tradition, unsupported by direct historical evidence, has assigned the birth of Edward II. When all possible allowances have been made for the unfinished state of the castle

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at the time, it is a very strange choice for a Queen's bower.¹ The tower should be ascended for the very fine view. Next in order is the ten-sided Queen's Tower, and lastly, opposite the King's Gate, the Exchequer Tower, where the records were kept. The outer bailey, or E. part of the castle, is surrounded by three towers of less importance, the Black Tower (S.), the Granary Tower (N.), which shows a perpendicular window, and a third tower N., whose name is unknown. On the E. is the splendid *Queen Eleanor's Gateway* (p. 186), standing considerably above the street, from which it was reached by a drawbridge. Above are magnificent arches. Castle Square, just E. of the castle, is a good open space with a statue to Sir Hugh Owen, the Welsh educationalist.

4. The original *walls*, which were built at the same time as the castle, surround the old town on three sides, the castle itself being on the fourth. They are best seen on the W. side, which faces the Straits, between which and the walls is the promenade. The round towers, which occur at intervals, have been used for various purposes, the first one passed, for instance, being a part of the county jail. The W. gate in the centre is flanked by two round towers, now the home of the Royal Welsh Yacht Club. Inside of the N.W. corner is built the little church of *St Mary's*, originally the garrison chapel, and contemporary with the walls themselves. The interior shows plain but good work

¹ Historians, as we have said, usually consider this claim unfounded, but some local antiquaries still uphold it. To do so, it is necessary to maintain (1) that the room was part of the original castle, (2) that it was not destroyed in 1294, (3) that it was incorporated without change in the Eagle Tower, when built in 1317. Local Welsh tradition is often uncertain (see pp. 57, 84, 235).

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of the period in the old stone of the arcades, chancel arch, window frames, and W. door. The town walls are actually the walls of the church, and the angle tower serves as vestry and belfry. On the N. and E. sides the walls and towers are put to various uses, and being mixed up with the other town buildings are not so well seen. Above the E. gate, which lies opposite to the W. gate, has been built the Guild Hall, and below there is another gateway, at right angles to the one above.

5. The site of the old Roman station of *Segontium* is on the Beddgelert road, about $\frac{1}{2}$ m. S.E. Two pieces of Roman wall are left. Walk down the road till Segontium Road S. diverges on the R. Turn down this, but almost directly turn L. up a lane, and one of the Roman walls is on the L., forming the S. wall of a garden. The other wall is near a cottage a little up a lane, which diverges from the Beddgelert road L., exactly opposite Segontium Road. It is private, but permission to view it is readily given. Both walls show good Roman masonry, with very hard cement but no *lateres*. In the field adjoining Roman coins and pottery have been found. The original parish church of Llanbeblig is close by, and shows the peculiarity of stepped battlements.

II. Carnarvon has no walks or rambles in its immediate neighbourhood, which need special description. They all derive their interest from the views of the Straits and the mountains, which are nowhere better seen than from Twt Hill. But for longer expeditions it is a very good centre. Several lines of railway meet there, and nearly all the more important rambles can be commenced either by rail or by road.

1. *Carnarvon to Bangor.* (a) *By road or rail* (9 m.), (b) *by steamer* (1 hour).—Described reverse way, p. 109.

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2. *Carnarvon to Llanberis. (a) By road* (7 m.).—There is a good road the whole way. Start E. from Castle Square, and when the road forks take the left-hand branch (R. to Beddgelert). The road ascends gradually for a mile, at the end of which the whole mountain circle is in view. The Llanberis gap is straight ahead, with Moel Eilio and the lower Moel Ddu R. and the Elidyr L. About $2\frac{1}{2}$ m. from Carnarvon we cross the Seiont and the railway, soon after which there is a good view of Snowdon. Presently Cwm-y-Glo is passed, the railway is again crossed, and the road descends to the foot of Llyn Padarn. (For the fine view, see p. 198.) The road keeps first to the S.W. side of the lake, then winds up a long hill, whence there is a sharp descent to Llanberis (p. 197).

(b) *By railway* (9 m.).—The railway keeps in the Seiont valley the whole way to Llyn Padarn, and the chief interest is in the river itself. The first view is of the estuary with its shipping and the castle beyond. Then the Seiont becomes a mountain stream, but is restrained by several weirs. It flows in a narrow and well-wooded valley, and there are pretty views of the river at the numerous points where the railway crosses it. After Pont Rug station ($3\frac{1}{2}$ m.) the valley becomes more open, and intermittent views are caught of the mountains, Snowdon (R.), Elidyr and Carnedd Dafydd (L.). The railway misses the really fine view from the foot of Llyn Padarn, and only allows of inferior views from its S.W. side. For part of the way it is carried on an ugly causeway over part of the lake itself. Llanberis station is a terminus.

3. *Carnarvon to Snowdon Station* (at Rhyd-ddu). (a) *By road* (9 m.).—Start E. from the Castle Square, and, when the road forks, take the R.-hand branch. The road steadily ascends for over a mile, passing on

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the L. Llanbeblig church. Then it makes a sharp dip into the valley of the Seiont, crosses river and railway, and again ascends gradually. After another dip the road climbs more rapidly to a summit level of 515 ft. at the 3rd milestone. From here there is a last view of Carnarvon and its surroundings, including Anglesey and the Rivals. The road now descends through the straggling village of Waen-fawr to the valley of the Gwyrfai, in which it continues right up to Rhyd-ddu. We are now among the mountains, which are at first low. In another mile Bettws Garmon is reached (5 m.). Moel Eilio is now L. with a well-wooded side and rounded summit. On the R. is the mighty bulk of Mynydd Mawr, the summit of which is still some distance ahead. The next mile brings us to the prettiest point in the Gwyrfai valley, usually called *Nant Mill*, though the mill has now disappeared and its site has been taken by a small reservoir. Just below it the stream dashes down in two pretty cascades underneath a picturesque one-arched bridge, which lies a little R. of the road. The scene is well-wooded, and the river water very pure from the two lakes through which it has passed. The fir woods of Moel Eilio, and Craig Cwm Bychan, the principal precipice of Mynydd Mawr, form a fine setting. In less than another mile we reach Llyn Cwellyn (see p. 244 for description), whose shores the road traverses for more than a mile. After passing the Snowdon Ranger Hotel the country opens L., and there is a splendid view up Cwm Clogwyn to the top of Snowdon. When the lake is passed there is a slight ascent to Rhyd-ddu, 9 m. (p. 243). Beddgelert is 4 m. distant.

(b) *By light railway* (12½ m.).—First we take the Afon-wen branch of the L. and N.W.R. for 3¼ m. to Dinas station, where we change for the light railway.



LLYN CWELLYN AND CRAIG CWM BYCHAN

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This first ascends, with good views of Anglesey and the Rivals, then passing Tryfan Junction, reaches the valley of the Gwyrfaï. After the Carnarvon road (see last section) is crossed, railway, road, and river accompany each other up the valley to Llyn Cwellyn. The scenery of Nant Mill (see last section) is not very adequately seen from the train. Then we reach Llyn Cwellyn and its station, where we can alight for the Snowdon Ranger Inn and path up Snowdon (p. 217). The railway now corkscrews along the hillside to its terminus "Snowdon Station" at Rhyd-ddu, the commencement of one of the two favourite ascents of Snowdon (p. 216).

CHAPTER XI

LLANBERIS

[*Approaches*—From Carnarvon (road or rail), p. 193; from Bettws-y-Coed (road) by Capel Curig, p. 151, and the Llanberis Pass, p. 200. A motor bus runs the whole way.]

I. 1. LLANBERIS lies a little S.W. of the level strath between Llyn Peris and Llyn Padarn, but nearer the lower lake. These two lakes, one of which, Llyn Padarn, is the largest in Snowdonia, entirely fill the narrow valley, which debouches from the Llanberis Pass. On the N. side Elidyr Fawr rises magnificently from their very shores to a height over 3000 ft. To the S. are green slopes, which ascend more gradually to Moel Eilio and its range. The summit of Snowdon, though unseen from the village, is only 5 m. distant S.E., but the precipices which it sends down to the

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S. side of the Llanberis Pass are well seen in profile, and form, with the corresponding ones of Glyder Fawr on the N. side, a vista at once grand and suggestive. But it is a scenic defect in the valley that on the N.W. side it opens out too decidedly into the flat country stretching to Carnarvon, so that in this direction there is no background. Also Llyn Padarn is somewhat monotonous in shape, and Moel Eilio stands too far back from it to be thoroughly effective.

Admitting, however, that the elements of beauty are not as skilfully disposed as at Bettws-y-Coed and Beddgelert, yet the striking features of the valley—the two lakes, the mountain girdle, including the dominant Elidyr Fawr, and above all the unrivalled pass—would lift the scene to a high place among Welsh beauty spots. It is well to emphasize this point, since more writers than one have spoken of Llanberis as a place which, at the best, could only claim to be second-rate. The truth is that, even as it is, scarred and marred by the persistent slate quarrying, it shows abundant traces of its former dignity and beauty. For the valley hitherto described is as nature left it, whereas we see now a valley in which irreparable havoc has been wrought. The side of Elidyr has been eaten away by the Dinorwic quarries to the height of quite 2000 ft. ; the N.E. side of both lakes has been spoilt by debris ; and, in particular, thousands of tons of rubbish have been shot into poor lake Peris, and bid fair to choke it up entirely. However, we must sadly allow that natural scenery has to give way to a solid industrial fact like work and wages for 2800 quarrymen.

Matters had not gone so far when Tennyson visited Llanberis in 1839. He describes Llanberis Lakes as " the most beautiful thing I saw this time in Wales."

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In the "Golden Year" he refers thus to the Llanberis scenery :

It was last summer on a tour in Wales.
Old James was with me : we that day had been
Up Snowdon ; and I wished for Leonard there,
And found him in Llanberis : then we crost
Between the lakes, and clambered halfway up
The counter side.¹

There is little temptation to-day for a Rambler to follow the poet's footsteps. And yet the mischief had begun even then, for witness the end of the same poem :

He spoke, and high above, I heard them blast
The steep slate quarry, and the great echo flap
And buffet round the hills from bluff to bluff.

The poem called "The Lake" was written at Llanberis during the same visit, but contains no local detail. The following passage may refer to Dolbadarn Castle, but it is not convincing :

Ruins of a castle, built,
When men knew how to build, upon a rock,
With turrets lichen-gilded like a rock.

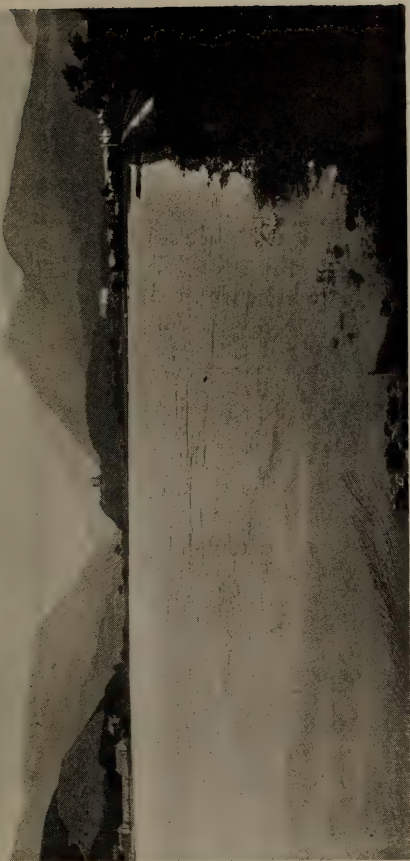
The "isle of bowers," where the Hills' mansion stood, has no prototype at Llanberis, but rather recalls Belle Isle in Windermere. Apparently Tennyson did not intend to describe any lake in particular.

2. The *village or town of Llanberis* is a large quarrying village turned into a tourist centre. It was unattractive from the first, and the change has not improved it. Comparison with places such as Bettws-y-Coed suggest some points in which Llanberis fails. In such a village the houses should not be too thickly

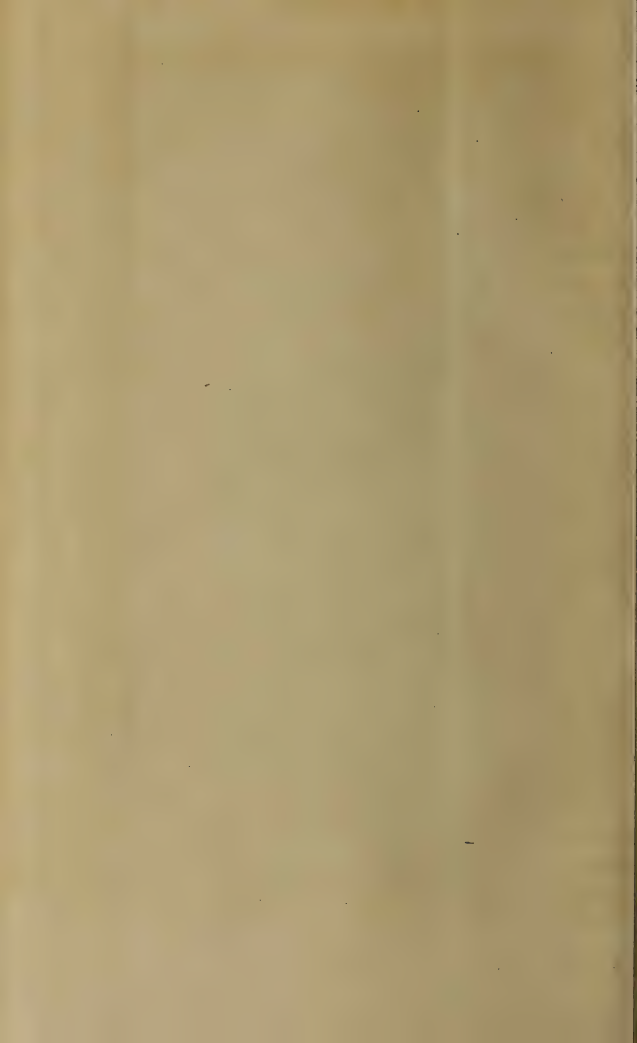
¹ Of course the simplicity of these lines is intentional. They form a setting for Leonard's song on the Golden Year.

crowded ; they should be interspersed with trees ; and there should be frequent glimpses from the streets of the surrounding scenery. These conditions are complied with at Old Llanberis (see p. 201), but at Llanberis proper the thick-crowding rows of mean houses shut out the scenery completely. At the S.E. end of the town, where the Victoria Hotel stands, matters are rather better. The large new church is pretentious rather than handsome.

3. *The Lakes*.—Originally the two lakes must have been one, but the turbulent stream descending from Cwm Brwynog has in the course of ages piled up a delta, which at last must have split the lake in two. Compare the separation of Buttermere from Crum-moch Water, and Derwent Water from Bassenthwaite Water. *Llyn Padarn*, the lower lake, considering that it is the largest and longest in Snowdonia (2 m. long), is somewhat disappointing. Its lower part lies well out in the flat country, so that the view from its head shows no background of mountains. Also it is too narrow for its length, so that none of the side views are effective. There is, however, one first-rate view, *i.e.* from its foot, which can be seen in perfection from the Carnarvon road, at the point where the traveller from Carnarvon catches his first glimpse of the valley. From the railway this view is not visible. The eye travels along a stretch of more than 2 m. of water (perhaps including Llyn Peris as well), which runs right up into the jaws of the Llanberis Pass, with the precipices of Crib Goch and Snowdon R., Y Wyddfa itself being visible, and those of Glyder Fawr L. The whole forms a magnificent and suggestive background. A little L. of the lake rise the Elidyrs, while R. a touch of human interest is given by the ruins of Dolbadarn Castle. The desolation caused



LLYN PADARN



by the quarries is as yet hardly seen. *Llyn Peris* is much smaller, and well set in a deep basin at the very mouth of the Llanberis Pass, surrounded by Elidyr Fawr, Y Garn, Glyder Fawr, and the precipices descending from Snowdon. Its S. bank is beautifully wooded. In itself it would be a lovely sheet of water, but the Dinorwic quarries have quite ruined it.

4. *Dolbadarn Castle* is reached by a pathway which leaves the road on the L., a little way after passing the Victoria Hotel, or by a path diverging R. from the road between the two lakes. The grounds are well kept and no charge is made. The castle is built on a rock, but is only a picturesque fragment, a round tower, with some window openings, and a square projection on the N.E. side. It commands good views of the two lakes. Its position seems to indicate that it was the final defence of the inmost recesses of Snowdon. But authentic details of its history are very scanty. The tradition that ascribes its building to Prince Maelgwn (p. 20) is clearly legendary. The statement, that it was here that Llewelyn ap Gruffydd imprisoned for long years his brother Owain Goch, rests only on the authority of Leland. It would be pleasing to believe that this was the castle where Dafydd made his last stand in 1283, but that honour really belongs to Bere Castle in the Cader Idris district. In the time of Edward II. the castle was rebuilt (or possibly built) to defend the Arfon plain from attacks by the Llanberis Pass. In the next century it was seized by Owain Glyndwr, and this time without doubt used as a prison, where his personal enemy, Lord Grey of Ruthin, was detained for months until his heavy ransom was paid.

5. *Ceunant Mawr Waterfalls*.—This and the castle are the recognized “lions” of Llanberis. The Falls

are on the Afon Arddu, the main stream of Cwm Brwynog (p. 212). After turning R. from the station, take the next turn L., and follow a path which presently bends L. When a viaduct on the Snowdon railway is seen ahead, turn R. through a gate, but immediately take a path L., leading under the viaduct to the side of the stream. Another way of reaching the Falls is to start by the track to Snowdon (p. 215), and directly after passing Vaynol Cottages to turn R., and pass under the viaduct, which leads to the gate already mentioned. The way is now up the stream, which flows in a beautifully wooded though somewhat miniature dingle. This soon comes to an abrupt end, where the stream literally falls into it from the top, but after a short direct fall, is turned sideways and plunges down a long and steep waterslide. It is difficult to get a thoroughly satisfactory view, and the best one is obtained from the Snowdon railway, which passes close by. This view, which is far finer than the one from below, can also be attained by not turning L. after the gate is passed, but continuing a little way up the hill. The waterfall itself is not immediately draped in foliage, but the whole effect is so strange that this is hardly a drawback.

II. 1. *Pass of Llanberis* (1169).—The name “pass” is sometimes used in Wales, not in the strict sense which all who know the English Lakes will understand, but simply as a passage among mountains. Thus the Pass of Llanberis is really only half a pass, that is, it takes us up from the foot to the summit and there stops. This, however, does not prevent it from being the most stupendous scene of its kind visible in England and Wales; for not only Sty Head and Honister Passes, but even Ennerdale, must give place to it, though the presence of an excellent carriage road

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detracts somewhat from its wildness. After leaving Llanberis we ascend a little, and then pass along the shore of Llyn Peris. But for the Dinorwic quarries right opposite the scene would be thoroughly charming. Then we descend to the head of the lake, and a little later reach *Old Llanberis*, which has retained some of the beauty that new Llanberis has never possessed. Its situation is charming, picturesque cottages being dotted about on the green strath, interspersed with trees. Around stand the lofty mountains, and the jaws of the pass are just beyond. The little church has been rebuilt, but retains some old Perpendicular work, including a good timber roof. Near it is the well of St Peris, long credited with magical powers.

A little further all cultivation ceases, and there is a continuous line of high precipices on both sides for 3 m., right to the top of the pass, with only a narrow passage between them. This tremendous effect is caused by two mountains only, Snowdon and Glyder Fawr. On our L. Y Garn sends down a shoulder to the pass, for a short distance after passing Old Llanberis, but, apparently realizing that his main business is with Nant Ffrancon, he retires in favour of Glyder Fawr, from whose broad S.W. shoulder, called Esgair Felyn (the "yellow shank"), there descends an almost unbroken series of nearly overhanging precipices. On our R. the precipices are connected with the two spurs of Snowdon, Crib y Ddysgl and Crib Goch, but the effect is more varied, huge rocks and pinnacles being fantastically intermingled with the rock wall. About half-way a most effective break is made by the wild upland ravine of Cwm Glas, with the peak of Crib Goch behind it. One striking feature of the pass is the succession of tremendous boulders, which have

been thrown down by the screes, chiefly on the Glyder side. The largest of these, nearly half-way, has been called *the Cromlech*, but it is obvious that its position is due to nature, not to man. Soon after passing it, a bridge over the torrent is crossed, and the top of the pass with Gorphwysfa Hotel appears in front, but more than a mile distant. When the laborious ascent is over, the precipices are past, but a last retrospective view shows the summits of both the mountains which have caused them, the clear-cut cone of Crib Goch well contrasting with the broad flat top of Glyder Fawr. Y Wyddfa itself does not appear from any part of the pass. (For continuation of the route to Pen-y-Gwryd (1 m.), Capel Curig (5 m.), Bettws-y-Coed (10 m.), see pp. 151, 138.)

2. *Llanberis to the Snowdon Ranger.* (a) *By mountain pass* (4 m.), an easy and pleasant walk. Start by the track to Snowdon, but directly after passing some cottages turn R., cross under a viaduct, and then turn up through a gate L. Soon there is a fine view of Ceunant Mawr L. (p. 199). The road now winds round R., and enters some fields by a wooden gate. After crossing two fields, we pass through an iron gate, turn L., and almost immediately cross the stream flowing from Llyn Dwythwch. After working round the long arm thrown out N. by Moel Goch, we ascend to the pass over 1500 ft. between Moel Goch (R.) and Moel y Cynghorion (L.), two points on the range of Moel Eilio. At the top Moel Hebog, Y Garnedd Goch, and Mynydd Mawr, appear, and after descending a little, Llyn Cwellyn is well seen. The path descends till it reaches the Snowdon Ranger path to Snowdon, near a gate. Turn R., and the path conducts to the road close to the Snowdon Ranger Hotel and Station. Snowdon is in view for most of the walk.

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(b) *By road* (10 m.).—Take the Carnarvon road, and about $1\frac{1}{2}$ m. beyond the foot of Llyn Padarn, just before the 4th milestone from Carnarvon, turn L. into a roughish mountain road, which ascends without any steep gradient to a height of 670 ft., and then descends to join the Carnarvon to Beddgelert road at Waen-fawr, 4 m. from the Snowdon Ranger Hotel (see p. 194).

3. *Llanberis to Carnarvon* (by road 7 m. or by rail 9 m.; see description the reverse way, p. 193).

4. *Llanberis to Bethesda* (8 m.; see p. 205).

5. *Llanberis to Nant Ffrancon* (1) *by Twll Du* (about 8 m.).—Take the road up the pass and, just after passing Old Llanberis Church, turn into a cart road L. This passes some cottages, and becomes a path, which ascends the hill past a few more cottages, and continues with a wall L. When this stops, there is no further track. Turn R., and proceed E. across the long grassy shoulder of Y Garn. Remember that our object is not to ascend Y Garn, but to work round into the depression between it and Glyder Fawr. At length the little Llyn y Cwn, lying in the depression, will be reached. The issuing stream descends to Twll Du, and the descent to Llyn Idwal is some way R. of it, marked by direction cairns which must be carefully looked out for, since otherwise the whole rock face is sheer precipice. (See also directions on p. 164.)

(2) *By Cwm Dudodyn* (about $7\frac{1}{2}$ m.).—This route involves no rock-climbing, but the pass is a high one (2310). Take the Llanberis pass road to beyond Llyn Peris, and then the second turning L. (the first turning leads round the lake). When the cart track turns away L., continue upward without turning, and ascend the long grassy slope in front, with Afon Dudodyn on the L. the whole way, and the ridge of

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Elidyr beyond it. Continue straight up to the gap between Moel Perfedd (L.) and Y Foel Goch (R.). In descending keep to the L. for Bethesda, and to the R. for Ogwen cottage. In the latter descent the stream should be crossed to the R. side about half-way down, to avoid some precipices.

III. *The Llanberis Mountains.*

1. SNOWDON (3570) see Ch. XII.

2. ELIDYR FAWR (3029) and Elidyr Fach (2564).

Elidyr Fawr is one of the giants of Snowdonia, and rises so steeply from the shores of the two lakes that, but for the disfiguring marks of the quarries, it would probably be considered the glory and chief ornament of Llanberis (if indeed the average visitor has eyes for anything but the more distant Snowdon). Even as it is, with sides hopelessly scarred by men's labour, its summit soars far into the sky and allows it to retain something of its natural grandeur. The top is a long, narrow, and level ridge, which, though composed of piles of huge rocks, yet slopes regularly and steeply on both sides like the roof of some vast house built for giants. When this is seen from the end, *i.e.* on the N.E. or S.W., it assumes the most perfect conical form shown by any Snowdonian mountain, with the single exception of Cynicht. The N.W. side of the ridge is buttressed by Elidyr Fach; the S.E. slopes steeply to the Dudodyn valley. The S.W. end has long been made shapeless by quarries, but the N.E. end descends by grand precipices to a finely-placed circular tarn called Marchllyn Mawr.

Ascent from Llanberis.—The only difficulty, and it is a pretty considerable one, is to skirmish successfully round the quarries which bar the direct ascent, without getting lost in the maze of quarry paths and tracks. Looking at the mountain from Llanberis, we see in

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front a thickly wooded hill, which rises directly from the shores of Llyn Padarn—somewhat L. of the quarries. Our way traverses the whole of this wood, and then works round at the back of it to the side of Elidyr Fach. Start by the road between the two lakes, and after passing them, take the road L., until the quarrymen's Hospital is reached (L.). Here the road turns R. up hill, but is immediately barred by a "no road" notice. We have to take a pathway (L.), which traverses the wood already mentioned. Presently there is a good view point over the lake. A little further a steep, narrow path R. must *not* be taken. Our path continues to a gate; after which it forks, and we turn R. Soon afterwards it forks again, and we turn L. on to the level top of a heap of slates. We are now turning the corner, and the side of Elidyr Fach, which is to be climbed, is full in view. At the end of the slates the path turns L. When it reaches a lane, turn R., and immediately afterwards L., and climb to a road, which is the main road leading to the quarries. (*For Bethesda turn L.*) We have now to climb to the *upper* quarry road, which is parallel to the lower. Turn R. a little to Fachwen Post Office, but, just before reaching it, turn up L. by a field path. This ascends to an intermediate grassy lane, whence a little further climbing will bring us into the upper quarry road. Turn R., and traverse this road till it ends in a conspicuous stile, at which turn L. on to the open hillside and climb (E.) After passing some slate heaps and quarry holes, a stiff further pull lands us on the top of *Elidyr Fach*. The cairn is placed not quite on the highest point, so as to overlook the whole of the Llanberis valley with the two lakes. A further climb leads to the ridge, the rocky, narrow, and steep character of which, with cairns set up at intervals,

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makes it an extraordinary sight, especially in misty weather, when nothing else can be seen. The summit cairn is well to the N.E. end of the mountain.

The view.—Only the lower end of Llyn Padarn is now visible, but the mountains beyond are finely grouped, first the distant Rivals (R.), just behind Moel Eilio, which has Llyn Dwythwch below it; then Mynydd Mawr, the range of Y Garnedd Goch and Moel Hebog. A little further is the gem of the view, a lovely peep into the valley of Old Llanberis, with the jaws of the pass indicated beyond. Snowdon with its peaks towers on the far side; on the near side is the tremendous wall of precipices which marks the Glyders, and is continued by Tryfaen. In front are the long grassy slopes, beyond Cwm Dudodyn, which lead up to the Nant Ffrancon peaks of Y Garn and Y Foel Goch, a range continued near at hand beyond the two Marchllyn tarns to Carnedd y Filiast. Beyond, most of the main N. range is visible, from the Carneddau to Y Foel Fras, with Penmaen Mawr more L. E. is the flat country with the Straits completely in view, from Puffin Island to S. of Carnarvon. Beyond is the whole of Anglesey and the sea.

Descent to Llanberis (1) by Cwm Dudodyn.—Continue N.E., and descend to the lowest part of the narrow broken ridge connecting Elidyr with Moel Perfedd. This should be done to get a good view of the circular hollow in which *Marchllyn Mawr*, one of the finest tarns in Snowdonia, rests beneath the frowning precipices of Elidyr. From this point descend R. to the deep-set Dudodyn valley, and keeping the stream R. the whole way, take down the grass slope to Old Llanberis (2 m. from Llanberis).

Note.—If Elidyr Fawr is to be climbed from Nant Ffrancon, the best route both for ascent and descent

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is either the depression between Moel Perfedd and Y Foel Goch (p. 203), or over Carnedd y Filiast (p. 182).

(2) *By Elidyr Fach.*—From the cairn proceed some way S.W. along the ridge, and then descend R. to Elidyr Fach. Continue down the far side due W. with care until a conspicuous stile is reached. Here turn R. and go some way along the road, but presently descend L. partly by scrambling, partly by field paths, to a lower parallel quarry road. Turn R. along this till the cottages and Post Office are passed, then turn L. down a lane, soon turning first R., then L. again round a cottage. This brings you to a path on the level top of a slate heap, which goes in the direction of Llyn Padarn, and presently passes by a gate into a wood. Llyn Padarn and Llanberis now appear below, and the rest of the route is plain.

3. *Moel Eilio* (2382) is the highest of a range of four mountains of a similar character. All are green rounded heights, but all, as it has been aptly said, are like apples out of which a large bite has been taken on the side facing Llanberis, *i.e.*, they all show on this side a circular hollow with dark precipices. The tourist is usually so busy with Snowdon that he hardly spares a thought to this lesser mountain. And yet the climb round the Eilio range is both easy and interesting, for it is a fact not sufficiently recognized that the highest mountains look their best from the lower heights, which best allow their proportions to be seen.

Ascent from Llanberis.—From the station turn R. (*i.e.* towards the village) and take the *third* turn L. The path leads upward, with a small stream R. and Moel Eilio straight ahead. Some gates are passed, after the third or fourth of which the path forks. Take the R.-hand branch, but immediately turn again L., and ascend past the highest house to a gate

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leading to the open hillside. Continue on the path L. of the ridge in front, but when Llyn Dwythych appears in front, and the path begins to descend, turn R. and ascend the ridge without a path by a slanting climb. When the ridge is gained, it has simply to be followed up to the top of Moel Eilio.

The best features of the view are (1) the flat country and the Straits W., reaching S. to Carnarvon, which is quite close. Further S.W. the sea-coast is seen to run past the Rivals to the pretty Llyn peninsula. (2) The valley leading to Beddgelert S. with its bounding mountains on the far side, especially Mynydd Mawr, Y Garnedd Goch, and Moel Hebog. (3) The grand prospect E. of the highest mountains grouped magnificently close at hand, including Snowdon, Moel Siabod, Glyder Fawr, Tryfaen, the Carneddau, and Elidyr.

A descent could be made S.W. to the Snowdon Ranger, but it is preferable to turn S.E. and traverse the three remaining summits of the range. From *Moel Cron* there is a good view of the fine precipitous cwm (L.) in which Llyn Dwythych lies, and further off Llanberis and its lakes. On the way to *Moel Goch* we get a beautiful view of Llyn Cwellyn (R.). From the top there is a considerable descent to the pass leading to the Snowdon Ranger (p. 202), followed by an ascent to *Moel y Cynghorion*, the nearest mountain to Snowdon, and commanding splendid views of two of its cwms. A steep descent N.W. leads us back to the track between Llanberis and the Snowdon Ranger, about 2 m. from Llanberis.

4. *The mountains W. of Nant Ffrancon* (Ch. IX.) can easily be climbed from Llanberis by the routes indicated in section II. 5, *i.e.* Glyder Fawr and Y Garn by the Twll Du route, Y Foel Goch and Carnedd y Filiast by Cwm Dudodyn.





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CHAPTER XII

SNOWDON

[*Approaches*—The ascent of Snowdon can be begun at five places, three of which are accessible by train. The first, *Llanberis*, is the terminus of a branch line from Carnarvon. The next two, *Snowdon Ranger* or “*Llyn Cwellyn*,” and the “*Snowdon Station*” at Rhyd-ddu, are on a narrow gauge line starting from a station a little S. of Carnarvon. These stations can be reached from Llandudno and most other stations in N. Wales sufficiently early in the morning to give ample time for the ascent and descent. The fourth place is *Beddgelert*, from which Snowdon is reached either by what is practically the Rhyd-ddu route, or by a path starting from Glan Aber (3 m. N.E. of Beddgelert). Finally there is the ascent from *Gorphwysfa*, at the head of the Llanberis Pass. This is the best ascent for those who start from Capel Curig and Bettws-y-Coed, and indeed is often called the Capel Curig ascent. The L. & N.W.R. motor coaches from Bettws-y-Coed to Llanberis may be used, but they do not run early enough in the morning to be wholly convenient. The relative advantages of the five routes will be discussed in section II.]

I. 1. THE popularity of Snowdon as a mountain for climbing seems to rest on the fact that it is the highest peak in all England and Wales. At the time of the last ordnance survey some considered it possible that Carnedd Llewelyn might turn out to be the higher, but the result definitely established the superiority of Snowdon by 76 ft. It is an interesting

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question whether, if the decision had fallen the other way, the crowds who now ascend Snowdon would have been diverted to Carnedd Llewelyn. As it is, those who climb Snowdon and no other mountain are justified in doing so, not only by its height, but also by its superior beauty and grandeur. Carnedd Llewelyn is a somewhat heavy and dull mountain, but Snowdon, as we all feel it is right it should be, is decidedly the finest of the mountains to which it gives a generic name. The central peak rises in a graceful cone 3570 ft. high, which dominates every view, easily overtopping all the neighbouring heights, and is hardly impaired by the curious wooden Noah's Ark, mis-called a hotel, which rests on its summit. And it is surrounded by such an assemblage of subsidiary peaks, deep hollows, tremendous precipices, and high-placed narrow ridges, as the rest of N. Wales taken together could hardly produce.

2. The summit is called by Welshmen *Y Wyddfa*, usually explained as the "far seen"; but which was originally *Y Wyddfa Fawr*, and probably means "the great burial-place," referring to the legend that the giant Rita was buried in the cairn. In the Middle Ages this was the only name of the mountain, the term Snowdon, which occurs in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle for 1095, being at first the English name for the Welsh "*Eryri*" ("the haunt of the eagles"), and thus denoting the whole of the mountain group we call Snowdonia. It is in this sense that the name is used in Welsh history, and not, as now applied, in reference to the highest mountain only, with which no special event is connected.

3. The limits of the Snowdon mass (in the modern sense) are nearly fixed by natural boundaries. It is wholly contained by three roads, (1) that on the

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N.E. which runs from Carnarvon to Llanberis, and then up the Llanberis Pass to Pen-y-Gwryd; (2) that on the S.E. which runs along the Nant Gwynant to Beddgelert; (3) that on the S.W. from Beddgelert to Carnarvon, which first runs up the Colwyn valley, and then crosses over the low watershed to the valley of the Gwyrfa. In three directions these roads give the boundaries of the group, but roads (1) and (3) intersect at Carnarvon, 3 m. to the W. of the mountains, and also enclose Moel Eilio and its range, which are not usually considered part of the Snowdon group. A more definite boundary on the N.W. would be the pass leading from Llanberis to the Snowdon Ranger (p. 202), and even this includes one mountain not in the Snowdon group, *i.e.* Moel y Cynghorion (p. 208).

The subordinate peaks of Snowdon, which act as satellites to Y Wyddfa, are four in number, Crib y Ddysgl (3476), Crib Goch (3023), Lliwedd (2947), and Yr Aran (2451). All four of these are grand mountains in themselves. Crib y Ddysgl is directly N. of Y Wyddfa, and only separated by a low depression from the central bulk. From it the narrowest and most razor-like edge in N. Wales stretches E. to the fine precipitous peak of Crib Goch, which is very conspicuous from the Llanberis Pass. S. of these two peaks lies Cwm Duli, the grandest and wildest hollow of the mountain, opening E., and enclosed on the S. by the Bwlch-y-Saethau ("ridge of the arrows"), which culminates in the vertical precipices of the double-peaked Lliwedd. The cwm contains three tarns, little Llyn Teyrn, the large Llyn Llydaw, nearly filling the whole cwm, and into which the precipices of Lliwedd descend with grand effect, and the high-placed and circular Glaslyn, directly beneath the central precipice of Y Wyddfa, which lifts itself

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1600 ft. above. On the S. side Lliwedd sinks very steeply but not precipitously to another fine hollow, Cwm-y-Llan, at the head of which stands the high and narrow ridge of Bwlch-y-Maen with Y Wyddfa (R.), and the conical and precipitous Yr Aran further off (L.). At the S. of Bwlch-y-Maen rises the little eminence Clawdd Coch, half-way between the two main peaks. Here two ridges diverge, one running S. to Yr Aran, the other, called Llechog, W. in the direction of Rhyd-ddu. The hollow they enclose is called Cwm Caragog,¹ but is inferior to the other cwms of Snowdon. N. of the long arm of Llechog, and lying between it and the ridge called Clogwyn du'r Arddu, is Cwm-y-Clogwyn, one of the largest and grandest of the Snowdon hollows, into which an almost continuous line of precipices descends. It contains five tarns, but of little account, the finest being Llyn Ffynnon-y-Gwas. Between Clogwyn du'r Arddu and another ridge stretching W. to Llanberis, also called Llechog,² lies Cwm Brwynog, with the little tarn Llyn du'r Arddu at its head, round which grand precipices, starting on the N. side of Clogwyn du'r Arddu, continue to run far under the steep W. shoulder of Crib y Ddysgl. Further N. Llechog, Crib y Ddysgl, and Crib Goch fall precipitously to the Llanberis Pass, enclosing some wild hollows, of which the finest are Cwm Glas, between Crib Goch and Crib y Ddysgl, and Cwm Glas Bach, W. of Crib y Ddysgl.

N.B.—The ordinary nomenclature has been followed. Some writers call Crib y Ddysgl by the name Carnedd Ugan, and keep the former name for the ridge extending half-way to Crib Goch.

¹ New Ordnance Survey ; otherwise Creigiog.

² The two Llechog ridges may roughly be distinguished as Llechog (N.W.), leading to Llanberis, and Llechog (S.W.), leading to Rhyd-ddu.

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II. Of the five routes up Snowdon three are much frequented, *i.e.* that from Llanberis, which is the longest climb, but on the whole the least steep, that from the "Snowdon" station (or Beddgelert), which is the shortest, but rough and gives little idea of the grandeur of Snowdon, except when passing over the Bwlch-y-Maen, and that from Gorphwysfa, which gives the best views of the mountain itself, but involves a steep and rough climb. The other two are little frequented, though they have on the whole the smoothest tracks. (This, of course, is spoken comparatively, for every Rambler will know that mountain paths are bound to be more or less rough.) The Snowdon Ranger path is considered marshy in its lower part, though it is really not worse than a bad half-mile on the Llanberis track. It is, however, somewhat indistinct. The route which starts from Glan Aber, lately cut by Sir Edward Watkin, has perhaps the best path of all for most of the way, but it ends in a steep scramble up a narrow zigzag. This seems to act as a deterrent, and moreover the path starts more out of the way than the others. Since the wise man will, if it be practicable, descend by a different path from that which he has ascended, it is necessary to describe both the ascent and the descent on all these five routes. First, however, we must describe the *Snowdon Railway*, which starts from Llanberis, and ascends by more or less the same route as the footpath, taking 1 hr. 20 min. for the whole journey. The line was opened for the first time on Easter Monday, 1896. It is worked strictly on the rack and pinion system, the gradient at the steepest being 1 in 5, and for most of the journey not more than 1 in 6. One carriage, as a rule, is used, with open seats for seeing the view, and with the engine pushing behind. There are four "stations"

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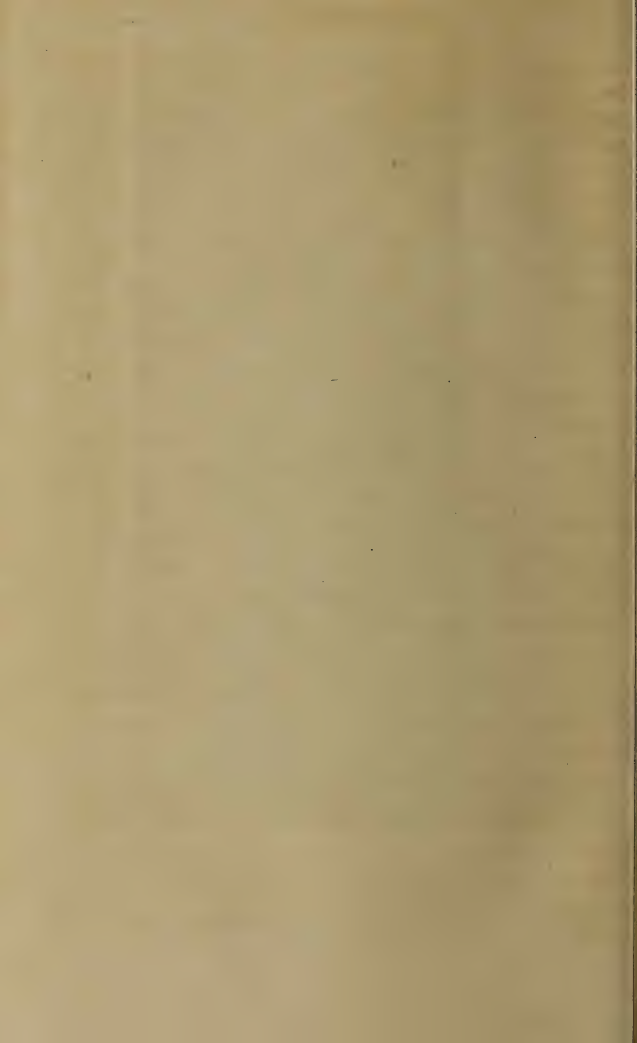
on the way up, but the halts are made, not for the convenience of passengers, but to water the engine.

To write and talk, as some have done, as though this railway were an outrage on nature, is surely a little beside the mark. When we have once seen the toy engine crawling fly-like along the tremendous slopes and precipices of the mountain, the idea that it can seriously affect the scenery will only raise a smile. Indeed there is some interest in watching from a distance its apparently daring course. The real cause of offence is that it tends to crowd the summit on fine days, and even such a complaint would be an unfair one, but for the not ill-grounded suspicion that many who come up care nothing for mountain or view, and so tend to vulgarize the scene. But for the nature-lover, whose bodily strength will not admit of walking, the railway is a great boon, while even for the walker it is a pleasing experience to ascend by it once in a way.

The course is up the long ridge of Llechog (N.W.), which stretches from Llanberis right up to the slopes of Crib y Ddysgl. To the N. the ridge descends in precipices to the Llanberis valley, but to the S. there is only a tame grassy slope, by which both railway and path ascend. Some time after starting there is a retrospective view of Llanberis and Lake Padarn. In about 5 min. there is a first-rate view of the Llanberis waterfall (L.). Then comes Waterfall station, soon after which Elidyr Fawr, the quarries, and Y Garn appear L. for a short time. Then we cross the gorge of the river. Snowdon summit is visible awhile, and Chapel station is reached. On our R. we have the Brwynog valley with the Moel Eilio range beyond, (p. 207), consisting of four smooth-sided hills, but all showing precipitous cwms facing in our direction.



CLOGWYN STATION ON SNOWDON RAILWAY



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To their L. is the depression called Bwlch Cwm Brwynog, over which are seen in succession first Moel Hebog, then Moel Llefn (just before the Half-way station), then the range of Y Garnedd Goch, then the Nantlle Lake with the Rivals beyond, and finally Mynydd Mawr. All this time the fine precipices of Clogwyn du'r Arddu, which continue L. under Crib Y Ddysgl, stand in front. On our L. Elidyr reappears for a moment, but otherwise there is no view, until just before Clogwyn station, when there occurs the grand *coup de théâtre* of the whole journey. The railway passes close to the edge of the precipice, beyond which there is a wonderful view down *Cwm Glas Bach* into the tremendous recesses of the Llanberis Pass seen 2000 ft. below. On the far side rise Elidyr, Y Garn, the gigantic precipices of Glyder Fawr, and, beyond the head of the pass, Moel Siabod. A little further on Carnedd Dafydd and Carnedd Llewelyn come into view behind the Glyders. The railway now turns R. up along the steep side of Crib y Ddysgl, and with cliffs sloping to the little Llyn du'r Arddu, seen directly below. This is the steepest part of the ascent. Every moment now the view W. widens, till the whole country is visible (R.) from Cardigan Bay to the sea N. of Anglesey. There is no further view L. till the summit appears, and presently the station is reached, which lies directly under it.

ROUTES UP SNOWDON.

1. *From Llanberis* (5 m.).—Since this route is essentially the same as that taken by the railway, the descriptions of the scenery need not be repeated. Leave Llanberis by the E. road, and turn R., somewhat past the Snowdon Railway Station. After passing some cottages, a wood is reached, through which ascent is made to a lane, the waterfall remaining unseen R.

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When we reach the open hillside, our track bears upward L. For about $\frac{1}{2}$ m. it is detestably wet, but after passing under the railway, it gets a little better. A long tramp up the side of Llechog (N.W.) follows, until we recross the railway, and gain the ridge, whence there is the grand view down Cwm Glas Bach (p. 215). Then we turn R. and ascend the side of Crib y Ddysgl. Soon we pass the last fresh water spring, which has been ignominiously put into an iron pipe. The Snowdon Ranger path now joins us on the R., and directly after the Gorphwsyfa path comes up on the L. from the recesses of Cwm Duli. The summit, is now in view, but half a mile's further climbing is necessary to reach it.

2. *From Beddgelert and the "Snowdon Station"* ($3\frac{1}{2}$ m. climb).—From the Snowdon Station at Rhydddu the climb is the shortest of all, but from Beddgelert nearly 3 m. along the road must be added.

(a) *From Beddgelert*.—Take the Carnarvon road to *Pitt's Head* (p. 243), and turn R. by a track passing the farm of Ffridd Uchaf. Directly afterwards, avoid a quarry track which diverges R. In $\frac{3}{4}$ m. a broader quarry track is crossed. Here the road from Snowdon Station comes in.

(b) *From Snowdon Station*.—Go a little N. along the line until a broad quarry path crosses it. Turn R. and keep to the path for $\frac{3}{4}$ m., when the Beddgelert path comes in on the R., immediately after a refreshment hut. Then leave the quarry path, and turn L. through a gate. After this no further mistake is possible. There follows some rough walking without much ascent, and then the half-way refreshment house is passed, near which is a cairn, marking the spot where Mr Cox, a tourist, died from exhaustion in October 1859. The open hillside is now reached. So far the

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view has been confined to the surrounding mountains, except that between Mynydd Mawr and Moel Eilio there is a beautiful view of Llyn Cwellyn with Carnarvon behind, and a strip of Anglesey including Holyhead mountain. A steep climb is now made up the shoulder of Llechog (S.W.). This is the hardest part of the ascent, the track being rough and stony. When the ridge is gained (about 2400), there is a glorious view down the precipices on the far side into *Cwm Clogwyn*, a tremendous deep-set hollow, right under Y Wyddfa, surrounded by precipices, and containing five tarns. The view has now much expanded both to the W. and to the S. We turn R. and continue to climb the ridge, keeping close to the edge. When we reach the little height of Clawdd Coch the path diverges a little L., and then reaches the *Bwlch-y-Maen*, the narrow edge between the steep precipices descending to Cwm Clogwyn (L.) and Cwm y Llan (R.). For a moment the path seems absolutely unprotected, with a steep drop on either side, but in reality it is perfectly safe, and no tourist need be afraid of it. This part of the walk makes up for considerable dullness in the earlier part. After passing it the summit is soon reached.

3. *From Snowdon Ranger* (4 m.).—The Snowdon Ranger is an inn on the banks of Llyn Cwellyn, and has a station called after the lake, a mile short of the "Snowdon" station. Nevertheless the latter route is used by nearly all tourists who come this way by train, and the present route has been undeservedly neglected, so that the pathway has become somewhat faint. Just beyond the inn take a track, which leads past the station and to the back of a farm. The path crosses the first field diagonally, then ascends the slope of Moel Goch by long, and somewhat unnecessary

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zigzags. Then the path turns R. in the direction of Snowdon, but soon after crossing a line of telegraph wires, it apparently turns L. up the hill. This, however, is not our path, but the pass leading to Llanberis (p. 202). For Snowdon we have to go through a gate directly in front, and cross the moorland plateau which lies at the foot of Moel y Cynghorion. The track is intermittent, but in fairly clear weather the direction is quite obvious, *i.e.* the prominent depression in front, called Bwlch cwm Brwynog, near to which the ascent has to be made to *Clogwyn du'r Arddu*, the ridge which lies beyond it and bounds Cwm Clogwyn on the N. When the ground gets unpleasantly boggy, keep a little L. A large detached block called Maen Bras is prominent in the cwm to the R. As we approach the ridge, the path gets clearer. A gate through a wire fence will be found a little R. of the path, and we soon reach the foot of the ridge Clogwyn du'r Arddu. The track now becomes a definite pathway, at first of smooth turf, which zigzags up to the shoulder of the ridge. Just below R. is Llyn Ffynnon y Gwas, the best of the five tarns in Cwm Clogwyn. Llyn y Gader, Llyn Dywarchen, the Nantlle Lakes, and part of Llyn Cwellyn are also in view, and the sea is visible in three places. From the top of the shoulder Moel y Cynghorion shows a fine precipitous face, and a good view is gained down Cwm Brwynog to Llanberis and Llyn Padarn with Anglesey behind. The Snowdon railway will probably be seen ascending Llechog (N.W.), and still further N. are Elidyr Fawr, Y Garn, and Glyder Fawr. The path now gets stonier, and gradually ascends the ridge. At one point a few steps out of the road L. give a splendid view down sheer precipices to Llyn du'r Arddu, at the head of Cwm Brwynog. Two fatal accidents have occurred here, but both in

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the dark. On the R. are other precipices leading to the depths of Cwm Clogwyn. The ridge presently gets broader, as it merges into the shoulder of Crib y Ddysgl. The ascent continues till the path crosses the railway, getting a little indistinct, and directly afterwards joins the Llanberis path half a mile from the top.

4. *The Capel Curig Route* (4 m. from Gorphwysfa).—The three ascents of Snowdon from the W. agree in that each climbs a long ridge leading to the top. But on the E. and S. the three ridges rise into peaked hills, nearly as high as Y Wyddfa itself, and therefore are not convenient routes to the summit. Consequently instead of three ridge routes, there are on this side of Snowdon only two routes, which ascend by the two great cwms. At present we have to describe the route up *Cwm Duli*, the grandest hollow of the mountain, with the finest peaks, precipices, and tarns. It is the route taken by visitors to Pen-y-Gwryd and Capel Curig, and starts opposite the Gorphwysfa Hotel at the top of the Llanberis Pass (1169). The first two miles are along a good cart road, made for the convenience of the copper mines near Llyn Llydaw, and only ascending about 250 ft. At first Y Wyddfa is concealed by the low hill round which the road winds, then it appears in front, grandly supported by the towering Crib Goch (R.) and the double-peaked Lliwedd (L.). The little Llyn Teyrn is passed L. and the road ascends a little till it reaches *Llyn Llydaw* (1420), a large tarn filling the whole of the cwm, which industrialism has almost ruined. The copper mine is now abandoned, but has left its ugly scars behind. The road we are on is itself an outrage, for it crosses the lake by a causeway which has quite spoilt the N. end. Further damage has been recently done by a

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power station, deep below in Nant Gwynant, which now supplies the neighbourhood with electricity. The power is derived from the water of the two unfortunate lakes, which is conveyed downward in two ugly pipes, like serpents which have involved Cwm Duli in their coils, and are crushing the beauty out of it. Llyn Llydaw in dry seasons is so drained of water that it shows an ugly margin of mud, and has not a drop left to start the Glaslyn stream on its downward course. Yet, though grievously defaced, Llyn Llydaw is a grand tarn, and the views of it in which the precipices of Lliwedd descend steeply to its waters, or Y Wyddfa itself rises behind it, are famous among Snowdon pictures. In 1874 a very primitive canoe was found in the lake, whence the suggestion has been made that there may have been here an ancient lake dwelling. After crossing the causeway, and skirting the W. side of the lake, the road gives place to a very fair track, which in $\frac{1}{2}$ m. ascends 500 ft. to the high-placed *Glaslyn* (1971). Here is another striking picture, a clear and beautiful tarn, which is nearly circular, having as background the stupendous central precipice of Y Wyddfa itself. Now the serious part of the climb begins. So far we have only ascended 700 ft. but Y Wyddfa is still 1600 ft. above us, most of which has to be climbed in the next mile. At first the narrow path is exceedingly rough and steep, passing over huge boulders; then it gets somewhat less stony, as it tends to the R. and winds up along the steep scree-covered side of Crib y Ddysgl and the ridge it sends down to Crib Goch. Y Wyddfa is grand all the way, and there are good retrospective views, but probably the climber will give most of his attention to the scrambling pathway. At last the depression between Crib y Ddysgl and Y Wyddfa is gained, and the full

LLIWEDD FROM LLYN LLYDAW





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view (W.) bursts upon us. Here we join the Llanberis track, and Y Wyddfa is $\frac{1}{2}$ m. distant L.

5. *Sir Edward Watkin's Path* (4 m).—This is up Cwm y Llan, and is named after the maker, who lived some years in a villa in the lower part of the cwm. It is a capital path, with an interesting climb at the finish, but starts in the out-of-the-way Glan Aber, 3 m. from Beddgelert. However visitors to Beddgelert are strongly recommended to climb Snowdon this way, and then descend to Pitt's Head, rather than use the Pitt's Head route both for ascent and descent. When the hamlet of Glan Aber is reached from Beddgelert, two or three houses and a chapel are passed L., and then the road strikes off up the cwm, first passing the house where Sir Edward used to live. For about $1\frac{1}{2}$ m. it is a good smooth cart road which traverses the narrower part of *Cwm y Llan*. Behind us is the well-wooded Glan Aber with a pretty stretch of Llyn Gwynant. Opposite is the S. side of Lliwedd, steep but not precipitous, and thickly wooded on the lower slopes. The stream below forms several pleasant cascades and deep clear pools. When the upper and more open part of the valley is reached near a deserted house, the road degenerates into a broad track. Soon a stone is passed L., recording that Gladstone in 1892, at the age of 83, addressed the assembled Welshmen here on "Justice for Wales." The inscription was set up the next year by Sir Edward and Lady Watkin. In a short $\frac{1}{2}$ m. the track reaches some deserted quarry works. The upper part of the cwm is now before us. Y Wyddfa is R., with the Bwlch-y-Saethau, which we have to traverse, striking off R. to Lliwedd, and the Bwlch-y-Maen (L.), which is continued by lower rocks, till it reaches the grand cone of Yr Aran L. of the valley. Sir Edward's new path, broad and well made,

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now diverges R. At first it ascends gently, then it turns more R., and makes a steeper ascent round the slopes of Lliwedd to the E. end of the *Bwlch-y-Saethau*. By this time the view has opened to the S. During the crossing of the ridge the path is level and easy. By a slight ascent to the top of the ridge a view is obtained straight down vertical precipices to Llyn Llydaw, 1000 ft. below, with Crib Goch rising grandly beyond. Finally, the shoulder of Y Wyddfa itself has to be climbed by a narrow zigzag path. This, seen from the ridge below, appears formidable, but in reality is by no means difficult, and no one with even a slight experience of mountains need be afraid of it. Mr Baddeley's caution, however, may be added, that it is a better route to ascend than to descend. It is a steep and scrambling path, with only bare rocks and screes around. At the end of one of the zigzags there is a fine view down to Glaslyn. The last zigzag lands us on the Beddgelert path a little short of the summit, to reach which turn R.

View from Y Wyddfa.—It is quite a commonplace of guide-book writers to state that views from the highest points are not necessarily the best. This is specially true of Snowdon. There is hardly an object visible from it, which cannot be better seen from lower heights. In fact, considering Snowdon as a viewpoint, its height secures very little advantage in an extra prospect. For half the circle the sea is at a comparatively short distance, and for the other half the view is bounded by the Clwydian, Llangollen, and Berwyn hills, all of which are equally in view from most of the Carnarvonshire mountains. Lastly, the great mountains to the N., which are little inferior in height to Snowdon itself, effectively bar the view in that direction. The only advantage gained by

SNOWDON

Snowdon's great height is the possibility of seeing a few very far distant objects when atmospheric conditions allow. It may be added that the principal charm of the view from most mountains in N. Wales is the cone of Y Wyddfa itself, so that the views of it are naturally superior to those *from* it.

The most striking features of the nearer view are the peaks, ridges, and hollows of the mountain itself, already fully described. Six long ridges are seen to stretch away like gigantic tentacles in every direction, enclosing four tremendous hollows and two others less marked. The objects in view are so numerous that it is best to begin with the lowlands, including the many sheets of water visible, and to reserve the mountains for a separate enumeration. Both descriptions start with the S. and travel round by W. to N.

The sea forms a girdle round more than half the view, from Cardigan Bay, where it is seen reaching far S. to the faintly-discerned St David's Head, to the N. coast near Rhyl. In front of Cardigan Bay are the low-lying Traeth Bach and Traeth Mawr, with the estuaries of the Dwyryd and Glaslyn, and Harlech Castle just beyond. To the S.W. the sea surrounds the Llyn peninsula. St Tudwal's Isles are well in view, but Bardsey Island can hardly be distinguished. Much nearer, at the far end of the Llechog (S.W.) ridge, is the low moorland, from which the Colwyn valley descends S. to Beddgelert, and the Gwyrfai valley N., the latter stream passing through Llyn y Gader and the very beautiful Llyn Cwellyn. Between these two lakes is the higher-placed Llyn Dywarchen, at the entrance to the deep-cut Nantlle Pass, over which Nantlle Lake is seen. N.W. is a peep of Llanberis, deep in the valley at the head of the lengthy Llyn Padarn. Beyond it the flat country stretches towards

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Anglesey, the whole of which lies before us like a map, quite flat save for the low Holyhead and Parys mountains. The Tubular Bridge shows up well, and the lower part of the Straits, though Carnarvon itself is hidden by Moel Eilio. Turning N.E. we see down the desolate Nant-y-Gwryd to the twin Capel Curig lakes at the far end. Near the head of the valley (L.) there is a peep of Llyn y Cwm Ffynnon. The only other glimpse of valley scenery is the gem of the whole view, *i.e.* the central part of Nant Gwynant, usually called Glan Aber, which appears S.E. at the far end of Cwm y Llan. It is backed by a range of rugged hills, on the shelf-like ledges of which gleam three tarns, whose names in order from N. to S. are probably Llyn Edno, Llyn yr Adar, and Llyn Llagi. Much further off in the same direction is Llyn Conwy, the source of the Conway river. In all, counting the tarns on Snowdon itself, about 20 pieces of fresh water are in view. None of these however are effective, except Llyn Cwellyn, and the two Snowdon tarns of Glaslyn and Llyn Llydaw.

The circle of mountains begins S. to S.W. with the range W. of Beddgelert, including Moel Ddu, Moel Hebog, and its N. projection Moel Llefn. Next come the range of Y Garnedd Goch, and Mynydd Mawr, forming the two sides of the Nantlle Pass, while farther off and close to the sea is a fascinating group of conical mountains, of which the famous Rivals are the highest point. Crossing the Gwyrfaï valley, we reach Moel Eilio, from which a line of heights extends in our direction to meet the ridges of Snowdon itself. To the N. stretches a great mountain barrier, chiefly formed by the long ridge which runs N. of the Llanberis valley and pass. On it are four great mountains over the 3000 ft., *i.e.*, Elidyr Fawr (nearly behind Crib y Ddysgl), Y Garn, Glyder

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Fawr, and Glyder Fach. The rounded hill in the distance between Elidyr and Y Garn is Moel Wnion. Between Y Garn and Glyder Fawr are, first, Y Drosogl (2) in the distance, then, nearer at hand, the range containing Braich Ddu, Carnedd Dafydd, Carnedd Llewelyn (the second highest mountain to Snowdon), and Yr Arryg. The top of Tryfaen can be detected peeping over the shoulder of Glyder Fawr. Further E., Glyder Fach is continued by a long range gradually sloping to Capel Curig, over which appear the heights of Pen Helyg, Pen Llithrig, and Creigiau Gleision.

The view E. is of a widely different character. In front stand two of the great Snowdonian mountains, Moel Siabod due E., and Moelwyn S.E., with Cynicht directly in front of it. These mountains, however, do not show their best sides. Between them is an irregular range of lower but curiously rugged hills, over which, about half-way, is seen Manod Mawr. Forming a background on the horizon are the heights of Denbigh and Merioneth. First on the far E. is the Clwydian range with Moel Fammau conspicuous, next the Llangollen hills, and the long monotonous line of the Berwyns. S.E. are the more interesting Merioneth mountains, especially Arenig in the middle distance, and, much further off, the Arans, from which a line of high ground runs to Cader Idris, whose long ridge may be seen to dip downwards into Cardigan Bay.

Besides these features there are a few long-distance views occasionally seen in very clear weather. The mountains of Wicklow sometimes rise over the sea-line, nearly due W., between Anglesey and the Rivals. The Isle of Man is on the horizon, almost in a line with Llyn Padarn and the Tubular Bridge. Scawfell appears nearly N.N.E., in the direction of Braich Ddu.

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Plynlimmon is about S.S.E., peering over the E. shoulder of Cader Idris. Far S., seen over Cardigan Bay, is Precely Top in Pembrokeshire.

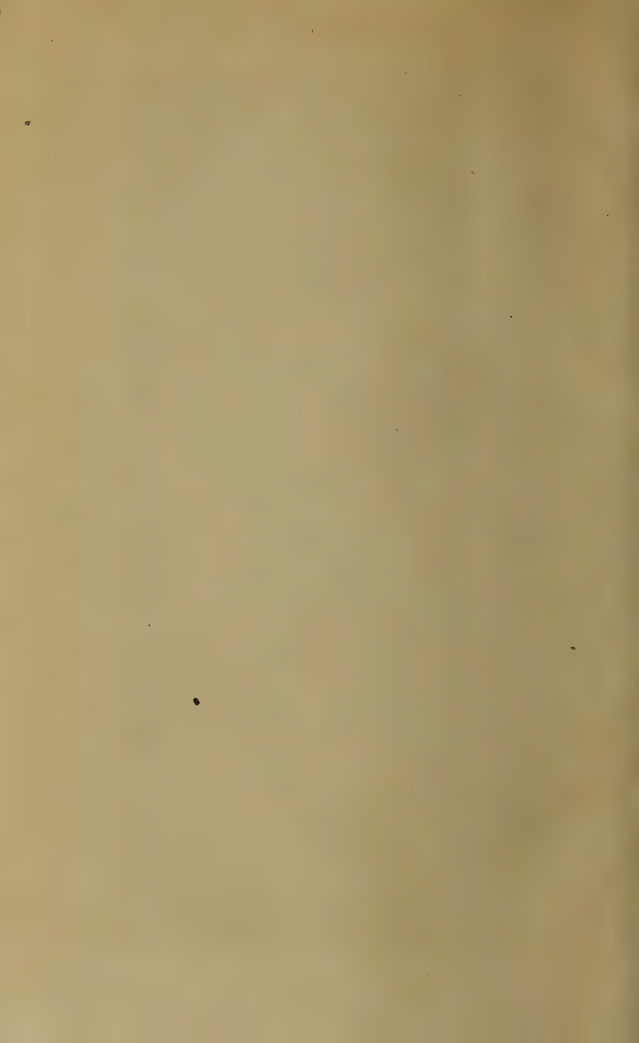
It is probable that the average tourist, who climbs Snowdon once, will not be as fortunate as George Borrow, who saw the whole view in clear light. The principal enemy is mist, which has an awkward trick of forming even on the clearest days, and usually chooses Y Wyddfa as its first resting-place. Accordingly the climber, who has carefully selected his finest morning for the ascent, often has the chagrin of observing the mists gathering, while he is laboriously climbing the middle slopes, and finally gets no view at all from the top. Equally tantalizing is haze, which on bright and promising summer mornings often spreads its impalpable veil more and more thickly, until soon after noonday nothing but the near view is seen, save in dim, vague outline. But on the other hand, there are glorious possibilities, even on misty days. The climber may have Tennyson's experience, of a dark storm-cloud gradually blotting out the view, which he described later in the "Princess" :

As one that climbs a peak to gaze
O'er land and main, and sees a great black cloud
Drag inward from the deeps, a wall of night,
Blot out the slope of sea from verge to shore,
And suck the blinding splendour from the sand,
And quenching lake by lake and tarn by tarn
Expunge the world.

Or the surging mists may part, and reveal mountain peaks high in the sky, or glimpses of valleys and lakes far below, an experience such as is recorded by Pennant. But still finer is the effect when the mist suddenly breaks and rolls away in white billowy cloud-masses, revealing the sun-lit country below with lake and sea

FROM SNOWDON—MISTS BREAKING





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gleaming like gold in the bright afternoon sun. One such experience (on September 13th, 1913) was that of the present writer. To the W. the mists had entirely been swept away, and given place to brilliant sunshine, while on the E. the great hollows of Cwm Duli and Cwm y Llan were still entirely filled with seething mist. Suddenly everyone who was on the top-most ridge saw his own magnified shadow thrown on to the mist, and surrounded by a beautiful circular rainbow. This weird Brocken-spectre, when everybody saw his own shadow only and not that of the others, lasted for quite half an hour.

DESCENTS OF SNOWDON.

1. *To Llanberis.*—Start N. by a well-defined path, which first descends pretty rapidly along the shoulder of Crib y Ddysgl. *En route* the Nant Ffrancon hills of Carnedd y Filiast, and Y Foel Goch appear between Elidyr Fawr and Y Garn. Then we reach the top of Cwm Glas Bach, from which there is a magnificent view into the depths of the Llanberis Pass. The path now turns under the railway. There is for a short time a splendid view of Llyn du'r Arddu and the cliffs above it. Then follows a long and dreary descent of the Llechog (N.W.) ridge, which on its unseen N. side falls in fine precipices to the Llanberis Pass, but on the S. side, which we are traversing, is a tame grassy slope, with no view but the Brwynog valley and the range of Moel Eilio beyond. The tramp over marsh and stones seems never-ending, but at last Llanberis and Llyn Padarn appear in front, and the retrospective view disappears. We pass through a gate and descend through a wood, and by some cottages to Llanberis.

2. *To "Snowdon" Station and Beddgelert.*—This is also a well-marked path. It starts S. and traverses

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the narrow ridge called Bwlch-y-Maen, with the deep hollows of Cwm Clogwyn and Cwm y Llan R. and L. Then it passes R. of Clawdd Coch, and turns along the Llechog (S.W.) ridge. As long as Cwm Clogwyn and Y Wyddfa are in sight, the walk is delightful, but when the path turns L., and commences a long and stony descent, it grows tiresome. The only alleviations are the views of the lakes seen below, especially the fine Llyn Cwellyn, and the vista of Carnarvon Castle and Anglesey. We gradually descend to the moorland between Yr Aran and the Beddgelert road. At last, just after passing a gate (the 4th or 5th in all), the path is crossed by a miners' track at right angles. If we turn R. down this track, we reach Snowdon station at Rhyd-ddu in about $\frac{3}{4}$ m. If we keep straight on by the path, we reach the Beddgelert road near Pitt's Head. Beddgelert itself is now 3 m. L.

3. To "*Snowdon Ranger*."—This track is not as distinctly marked as the others, and, if the descent be commenced in mist, it is well to be a little careful. In clear weather the hotel is full in view from the top, on the near side of Llyn Cwellyn, and the direction of the path is clearly indicated. Take the Llanberis path for $\frac{1}{2}$ m. and note carefully where the Pen-y-Gwryd track diverges R. About 80 yds. further the Snowdon Ranger track diverges L., just where there is a rudimentary wall. The end of the track has been obscured by the railway, which is crossed almost immediately, but it can be picked up at once on the far side, where for a short time it runs parallel with the railway. Then it diverges L., and gradually descends the ridge of Clogwyn du'r Arddu. The fine precipices bearing that name are on the R., and may be seen presently by a slight divergence, with Llyn du'r Arddu at their foot. On the L. also are precipices into Cwm

SNOWDON

Clogwyn, so that, in misty weather, the path should be carefully kept. Presently we descend L. by steep grassy zigzags, turn R. again at the bottom and pass close under Bwlch Cwm Brwynog, the col separating Clogwyn du'r Arddu from Moel y Cynghorion. The rest of the route is along the lower grassy slopes of Moel y Cynghorion (R.), with the lower part of Cwm Clogwyn on the L. The track is somewhat boggy and intermittent, but Llyn Cwellyn is a safe guide. Presently a gate is passed through, the track becomes definite again, and before long we reach the railway station and the hotel.

4. *To Gorphwysfa, Pen y Gwryd, and Capel Curig.*—This also is a well-marked path. Take the Llanberis path for about $\frac{1}{2}$ m. and at Bwlch Glas turn R., into the depths of Cwm Duli. The track zigzags down the L. side of the hollow, with the ridge from Crib y Ddysgl to Crib Goch above on the L., and Y Wyddfa and Lliwedd (R.). After a detestably stony descent to Glaslyn, the worst is over. A broad track descends to Llyn Llydaw, and joins a good cart road, which, after crossing the lake by a causeway, bends L. past Llyn Teyrn, and descends to Gorphwysfa. The Pen y Gwryd Hotel is a mile further R. This is the most picturesque descent of Snowdon, since first-rate views of Y Wyddfa and its satellites Lliwedd and Crib Goch are gained the whole way, and form excellent backgrounds to the two fine lakes (see p. 220).

5. *To Glan Aber and Beddgelert (Sir E. Watkin's Path).*—The start is on the Beddgelert path, but after the first marked group of rocks is passed, just where the pathway is turning R. to avoid the second group, a narrow zigzag pathway will be found to start on the L. This, if seen in a mist, may look formidable enough to deter some tourists. In reality it is not dangerous,

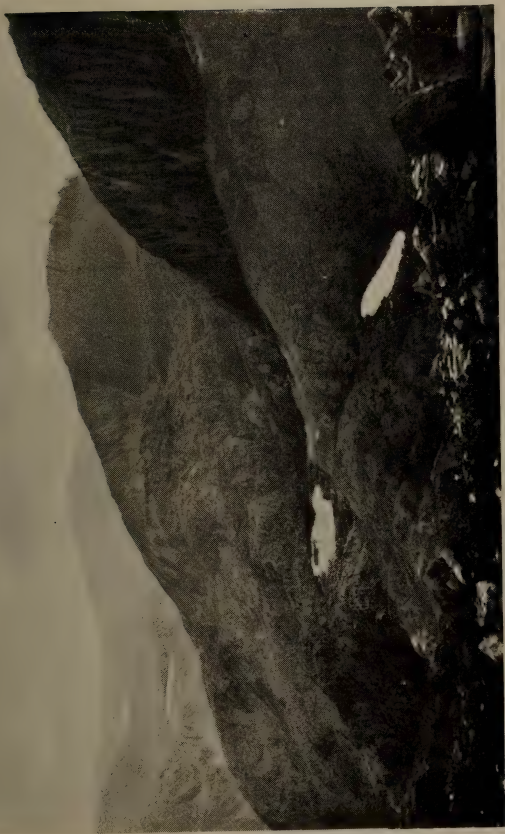
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though perhaps a better path for ascending than descending. At the foot of the slope the path leads to the Bwlch-y-Saethau, across which a wider path leads to the shoulder of Lliwedd, with good views into Cwm Duli (from here Lliwedd might be climbed, and a descent made from it to Pen y Gwryd or to Glan Aber). The path turns R. on reaching Lliwedd, and winds down gradually to the upper part of Cwm y Llan. A good broad track now leads down the cwm into the road at Glan Aber, whence it is 3 m. R. to Beddgelert.

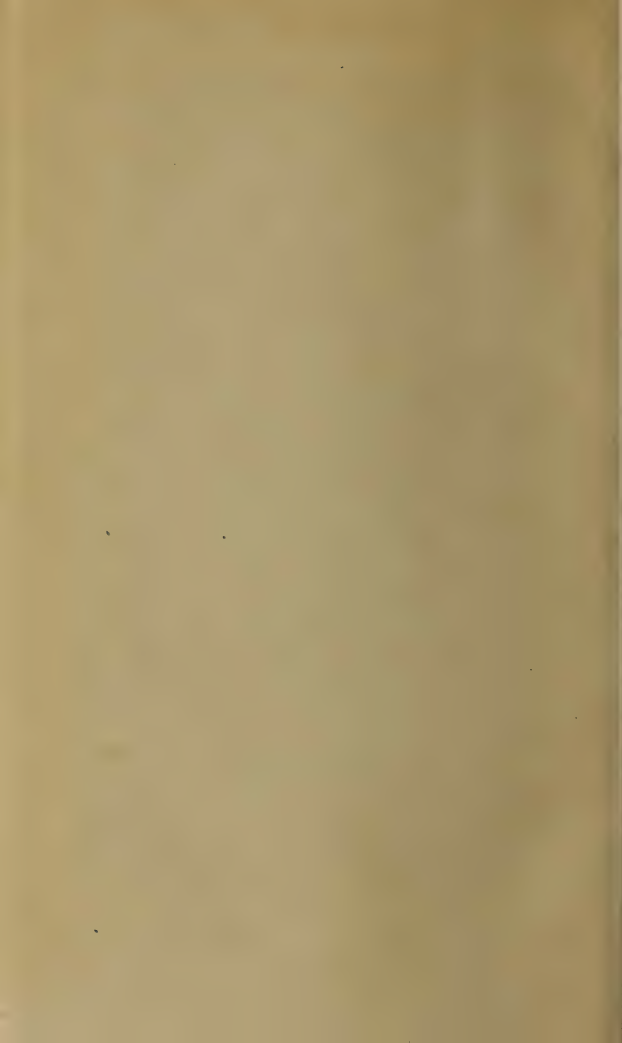
III. *Other rambles about Snowdon.*—(N.B.—Most of these are actually pathless.)

1. *The Capel Curig upper path* (otherwise “the pig-track,” probably a corruption of “the pixies’ track”).—This diverges from the ordinary route about 300 yds. from the start; first zigzagging up the hill R. to a little grassy saddle, called Bwlch Moch, and then keeping well above Llyn Llydaw, until at last it joins the ordinary path, about $\frac{1}{4}$ m. above Glaslyn. Though faint in parts, it may be taken as an alternative route to the top in clear weather.

2. *Crib Goch* (3023).—This fine conical peak is one of the chief ornaments of Snowdon, and towers grandly above the summit of the Llanberis Pass. From Gorphwysfa take the “Pig-track,” and at Bwlch Moch turn up R. and climb to the top by a steep scramble over broken rocks. Hence a narrow and broken ridge stretches S.W. towards Crib y Ddysgl. This is the true Crib Goch (*i.e.* “red crest”), on which no one with unsteady nerves or feet should venture. It is in parts exceedingly narrow, and has a vertical drop into Cwm Glas close on the R. At the end the ridge widens, and then splinters up into the impressive *Crib Goch pinnacles*, which can be passed on the S.



CRIB GOCH FROM CWM GLAS



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to Bwlch Goch at the top of Cwm Glas, where Crib Goch ends and Crib y Ddysgl, its continuation, begins.

3. *Crib y Ddysgl or Carnedd Ugan* (3493).—This grand summit is little more than $\frac{1}{2}$ m. N. of Y Wyddfa, and is easily reached by slightly diverging from the Llanberis path. It is less than 100 ft. lower than Y Wyddfa, but in massive bulk actually surpasses it, and three of the six Snowdon ridges start directly from it. To the view it adds a new feature of the most fascinating order, for now we look over into Cwm Glas, the wildest recess of Snowdon, and right down into the Llanberis Pass nearly 3000 ft. below. The ridge leading S.W., the true Crib y Ddysgl, is very narrow, but presents no real difficulty until Bwlch Goch is reached. Here those who do not care to face the Crib Goch ridge can, after visiting the Pinnacles, descend R. to the "Pig-track," or L., by Cwm Glas to the Llanberis Pass.

4. *Cwm Glas*.—This is one of the finest recesses of Snowdon, stretching N. from the Crib Goch and Crib y Ddysgl ridges down to the Llanberis Pass. Though crags and precipices lie all around, the Cwm is perfectly safe in fine weather, and forms the shortest, though perhaps the roughest and steepest route, for ascending or descending Snowdon. It contains two small tarns, which form good direction marks.

The ascent leaves the Pass of Llanberis road, just W. of the 11th milestone from Carnarvon. Cross the beck on the S. by a footbridge, and climb up the cwm, at right angles to the Pass, keeping near the stream. When it forks, climb steeply between the two branches, bending presently somewhat L., till you reach the lower tarn. We are now in the inmost recesses of the cwm. To the R. are the precipices of Cynr Las ; to the L. Crib Goch. In the centre, just

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beyond the tarn, the valley is cut in two by the projecting buttress of Clogwyn y Person (3260 ft.), with the "Parson's Nose" in front. Here we can (a) continue almost due S. to *Bwlch Goch*, (b) turn R., skirt the cliff till the smaller tarn is reached; then ascend a steep green bank R., keeping Cyn Las well R., direct to the summit of Crib y Ddysgl.

The *descent* of Cwm Glas from the summit of Crib y Ddysgl is simple enough, for the grass slope with which it begins is well in view, and after this no serious mistake is likely to be made.

5. *Lliwedd* (2947) is a fascinating mountain, both for its graceful double peak, and for the tremendous vertical precipices which descend to Llyn Llydaw. At their foot is a melancholy white cross, commemorating a fatal climbing accident. The mountain, however, can be safely ascended in three ways, (a) from Sir E. Watkin's path, (b) up the long steep slope from Glan Aber, (c) from Llyn Llydaw by the L. shoulder, which can be reached from the Capel Curig path by taking a path L. just before the causeway (p. 219), is reached. When the ridge is gained, turn R. and ascend, keeping just behind the precipices. From the top the view of Y Wyddfa, Crib Goch, and the Glyders is absolutely overwhelming. S. is a full-length view of Nant Gwynant, as far as Beddgelert, with Llyn Gwynant at our feet. The lower peak should also be ascended, as it gives the best view of the N. precipices from above.

6. *The Miners' Track*.—This was found the quickest route from Glaslyn copper mines to Glan Aber. It climbs steeply from near Glaslyn to the W. end of Bwlch-y-Saethau, joining Sir Edward's path. Some ropes and bars are fixed in difficult places.

7. *Ascent or Descent by Yr Aran* (see Ch. XIII. p. 249).

BEDDGELERT

CHAPTER XIII

BEDDGELERT

[*Approaches*—(a) From the N. by coach 4 m. from the Rhyd-ddu or Snowdon Station from Carnarvon (see p. 194); (b) from the S. by a drive of 7 m. from Portmadoc (see section II., p. 236); (c) from Bettws-y-Coed (17 m.) by the road descending Nant Gwynant from Pen y Gwryd (pp. 138, 151, 239). This, however, is a long and inconvenient approach.]

I. IN charm of situation the village is not far behind Bettws-y-Coed, though of a very different character. The valley in which it lies is formed by the junction of two other valleys, those of the Glaslyn and the Colwyn, streams descending from the E. and W. slopes of Snowdon respectively. They unite in the centre of the village, and then, in another mile, descend rapidly through the pass of Aberglaslyn to the level Traeth Mawr. Between the two streams lies the ridge which runs down from Yr Aran, the most S. pinnacle of the Snowdon group. Yr Aran itself is not in view from the village, being hidden behind Y Graig Wen, its bulky projection to the S. The ridge finally ends in steep crags, picturesquely overhanging the houses, which nestle beneath them just where the two streams mingle their waters. Most of the village is in the angle between the tributary rivers, and part of it runs up into the lower parts of their valleys. Unfortunately it contains few well-built houses, and the whole effect is somewhat dingy and squalid. The houses, however, W. of the Colwyn, stretching to the Royal Goat Hotel, are better built, and partly redeem the look of the place. The bridge over the Colwyn,

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just before its junction with the Glaslyn, is pleasant enough, though the structure is of no antiquity, its predecessor having been carried away by a flood in 1906. It is difficult to realize, until one has actually seen it, what a volume of water these small streams can bring down. Sometimes a cloud-burst during the night on Snowdon will turn both streams ere morning into raging torrents. Stranger still is the occasional result, when it rains on the W. side of Snowdon, and not on the E., so that the Colwyn is in flood, while the Glaslyn has its ordinary appearance. Since the Glaslyn has passed through four lakes, it is both clearer and more equable in flow than the Colwyn, which is affected by every mountain shower, and in dry weather dwindles to almost nothing.

A little S. of the bridge and the waters-meet is the *Church*, which, for N. Wales, is of considerable interest. Beddgelert was the seat of an ancient priory, the oldest but one in N. Wales, which in the 13th cent. was patronized and added to by Llewelyn the Great. The buildings and archives subsequently disappeared in a fire, but it can hardly be doubted that we have a fragment of it in the Early English work of the church. There is a good triplet of lancets at the E. end, and the two arches leading into the N. transept have excellent, though plain, Early English mouldings. The W. door and the bowl of the font also may be old. From the waters-meet a path leads S. along the W. side of the Glaslyn. After passing one field and entering a second, the so-called *Gelert's Grave*, from which the place is said to take its name, will be seen R. in the centre of the field. It now consists of three rude stones, shaded by a solitary ash-tree. The celebrated legend as told by W. R. Spencer in a familiar ballad, is that Llewelyn the Great, when going hunting, left his infant

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son to the charge of his hound Gelert. On his return, finding the hound with bloody jaws, he rashly inferred that it had devoured his child, and at once killed it, but discovered too late that the faithful hound had fought and killed an enormous wolf, which had attacked the child. The tale is common to the folk-lore of many countries, and varieties of it are found even in India and Persia. Moreover, it has no real connection with Beddgelert at all. The name has been supposed by Borrow and others to mean the grave of Kelert, presumably a local saint; while the connection with Gelert the hound is said to have been deliberately introduced, about a century ago, by a canny landlord of the Royal Goat, who rightly saw that the story would prove attractive to tourists. The connection of Llewelyn with the priory would lend probability to the story that he had a palace here, which indeed is quite possible apart from the story. Other literary references to Beddgelert may be found in Southey's "Madoc," and Kingsley's "Two Years Ago." Borrow also spent a night at the Royal Goat, and next morning walked S. through the Pass. "The vale of Gelert," he says, "is a wondrous valley, rivalling for grandeur and beauty any vale either in the Alps or Pyrenees."

The "grave" is at any rate an admirable view-point for grasping the features of the valley. We are in the centre of a green and level strath, of oval shape. To the E. runs the river, close under the precipice of Craig y Llan, a fine little crag, which, though only 900 ft. high, makes up for its comparative lowness by its steepness, fine colouring, and the rich drapery of its fir-trees. On the W. rises Moel Hebog (2556), the monarch of the scene, showing a steep side of rough grass and rock, which at the top becomes more pre-

cipitous. To the S.W. lower slopes continue without a break, curving round in the direction of Craig y Llan, and entirely shutting in the valley to the S., save for the narrow pass of Aberglaslyn. To the N. the village is seen clustering under the rocky end of Y Graig Wen, while the mountain itself rises majestically above. E. of it is the valley of the Glaslyn, with Yr Aran (2451) dominating it on the L. and further off the grand double-peaked Lliwedd (2947). To the L. of the Colwyn valley (W.) Moel Hebog is continued by Moel Llefyn (2094), which exhibits a graceful serrated outline, while right in the background are the first three heights of the range of Y Garnedd Goch (2329 is the highest point in view). Beddgelert, therefore, may well be described as a centre for mountain climbing rather than, like Bettws-y-Coed, one for short walks and rambles.

II. 1. *Portmadoc to Beddgelert* (7 m.).—This route is best described as an approach to Beddgelert, and not as a walk from it. If we are walking or riding S., our backs are turned upon all the fine features of the view. Also the *Pass of Aberglaslyn* should be first approached from the lower end.

Portmadoc is about a century old, and owes its origin to the enterprise of W. A. Madocks, who, early in the 19th cent. drained the extensive plain now called the *Traeth Mawr* ("large beach or shore"), but formerly an arm of the sea, stretching right up to the Pass of Aberglaslyn. The sea was kept out by an embankment right across the estuary, over which a road and railway now run, and 7000 acres were thus reclaimed. Portmadoc was founded at the W. end of this embankment, and owes its present prosperity to the Ffestiniog slate quarries, of which it serves as the port, the slates being brought down here by the toy railway

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(p. 268), whose terminus is close to the harbour S. The Cambrian station is $\frac{3}{4}$ m. distant N. of the town, a fact to be noted most carefully.

The Beddgelert road first diverges L. to Tremadoc, in the centre of which turn R. A little further is the house of Tan yr Allt, once the home of W. A. Madocks, who created and named Tremadoc as well as Portmadoc. In 1812 he let the house to the poet Shelley, who took an active interest in his great scheme of reclaiming Traeth Mawr; but six months later Shelley left the village in a hurry, in consequence, as he said, of a murderous attack on him by a ruffian at night. For long years the story was more than half suspected to be a hallucination of Shelley himself; but it is quite possible that the assailant was a farmer named Evan, who was angry at Shelley's curious habit of roaming on the slopes of Moel Ddu with a pistol, and shooting, from pure kindness, any sheep which had the scab. Assuming that the object was only to frighten Shelley out of the village, it was completely successful.¹

The road to Beddgelert now runs N. On the W. there are fine wooded cliffs the whole way, just above the road, first belonging to a hill called Yr Allt Wen, which buttresses the road for some distance, finally merging into the slopes of the loftier Moel Ddu. On the R.-hand the flat Traeth Mawr forms a striking contrast, and supplies a unique foreground for the mountain view. Two miles from Tremadoc a little inn is passed, after which the Glaslyn, now a quiet, canal-like stream, is close on the R. The mountains get finer and finer. On the N.E. Moelwyn shows a fine dome-shaped outline, and a little N. of it Cynicht stands up as a perfectly clear-cut cone. Further N. is a very fine, but more distant, view of Snowdon.

¹ See *Century Magazine*, October 1905.

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Presently the thick-growing woods on all sides, and the transformation of the hitherto sedate Glaslyn into a foaming torrent, show that we are close to the celebrated pass.

The *Pass of Aberglaslyn* will probably be familiar to all from photographs. On either side is a precipitous, almost vertical, cliff; on the E. the end of Craig y Llan, on the W. a spur of Moel Hebog, which approach so close to one another that there is only just room for the descending road and river. At the very exit, the gap is spanned by an ancient one-arch bridge, beautifully draped in ivy. There are two views, one of the bridge from the river-bed below, reached through a wicket-gate, the other of the pass from the bridge. The arrangement of the foliage is most effective. Trees of all sorts cluster thick just outside the pass and round the bridge, but in the pass itself the lower slopes alone are veiled in feathery fir-trees, above which the upper part of the cliffs rises into view. These are finely coloured and covered with heather. From the bridge the E. cliff is the more effective, but view points should be looked for, from which *both* cliffs appear as fine precipices at the same time. The Glaslyn has a sufficiency of water even in dry weather, and usually descends in a chain of cascades and remarkably clear pools. After heavy rains it tears through the gorge in a continuous sheet of raging foam.

Beddgelert is still $1\frac{1}{2}$ m. distant. The pass is very short, the whole descent being 100 ft. only; and the circular valley soon opens out. In fact, lovely as the scene is, it is perhaps a pity that the word "pass" has been applied to it at all, for the name suggests associations, which this valley scarcely fulfils. The mountains appear one by one in front, first Y Garnedd



ABERGLASLYN—THE GLASLYN IN FLOOD

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Goch, then Y Graig Wen, and finally Yr Aran, which grandly commands a wooded reach of the road. The last half-mile may be either by the path beside the river, or by the road.

2. *Beddgelert to the Pass of Aberglaslyn and back.*—Those who can arrange it so, should approach Beddgelert from the S. But if Beddgelert has been reached from elsewhere, the first walk will naturally be to the pass. This should be taken by the river, the best plan being to go by one side and return by the other. After crossing the bridge over the Colwyn, turn S. and keep first the Colwyn and then the Glaslyn L. The pleasant path beside the charming stream traverses four fields, and then rejoins the road, which has taken a circular course W. of the valley. The road continues near the river, and the valley rapidly narrows and then descends to the pass. (For description see last paragraph.) Cross the bridge, and immediately turn L. up the river-bank. At first it appears as if there could be no path at the foot of the steep cliffs, but, though scrambling at first, the path is always there, and conducts us back without danger to the wooden bridge over the Glaslyn, near the watersmeet at Beddgelert.

3. *Beddgelert to Pen y Gwryd by Nant Gwynant* (8 m.).—Nant Gwynant is the most satisfactory mountain valley in Wales. Other valleys may be more beautiful, and have more wayward and charming streams, but they are only set in hills, not, as the Nant Gwynant, in lofty rugged mountains. Moreover, though neither cataract nor rapid interrupts the quiet course of the Glaslyn, yet it passes through two lakes of exquisite, though somewhat miniature, loveliness. The valley is divided into three distinct parts by slight turns among the mountains. The upper part, Nant

Gwynant proper, lies close under Snowdon and Lliwedd, with Llyn Gwynant at its lower end. The middle reach is a thickly wooded and narrow dell called Glan Aber, lying near the mouth of Cwm y Llan. At the head of the lower reach is Llyn y Ddinas, below which there are 2 m. of gentle descent to Beddgelert. This lower part seems to have no distinctive name, but it will be most convenient to apply the name Nant Gwynant to the whole valley, which otherwise might be called the valley of the Glaslyn. The lower part, including Llyn y Ddinas, and Dinas Emrys, supply full materials for an afternoon's ramble. Accordingly the tourist is advised to do this separately on foot, and take his cycle for the excursion to Pen y Gwryd.

The entrance to the valley is through quite a narrow pass, between precipitous crags L., and a projecting spur of Craig y Llan (R.), but the untidy cottages spoil the effect. Immediately above, the valley opens into a wide and pleasant green strath, with the Glaslyn winding through it. On the L. are the heights of Y Graig Wen, Yr Aran, and the double-peaked Lliwedd. All send down richly wooded slopes to the valley. On the R. are lower and less wooded hills with fine heathery crags. In $1\frac{1}{2}$ m. from Beddgelert the valley is narrowed decidedly by Dinas Emrys, L. of the road.

Dinas Emrys, a famous spot in Welsh legend, is a little conical hill almost detached, with flat rocky top, and wooded sides so steep that the short climb looks somewhat formidable. Really it is quite easy. After passing the milestone ($1\frac{1}{2}$ m. from Beddgelert), go on a little until the trees stop on the L., then turn L. through a gate and go straight forward. On reaching the narrow ridge of the hill turn L. again to the top. Here are the remains of an old stone fort. In three places there are traceable sunken foundations,

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surrounding hollow enclosures. Legend calls the builder Vortigern, who, driven from his kingdom of Kent by the Saxons, fled to Wales, and was advised to erect a fort here by the celebrated Merlin, also called Merlin Ambrosius, of which Emrys is a corruption. When the foundations were being dug, a red and a white dragon were found sleeping, who sprang into the air and fought. From the victory of the white dragon Merlin augured the Saxons would conquer the Britons.

When we rejoin the road, it is best to leave it almost directly R., and, crossing the Glaslyn by a footbridge, continue the path till it reaches the lake. *Llyn y Ddinas* is about $\frac{3}{4}$ m. long, and lies in a basin 170 ft. above sea-level. In form it is nearly oval, though a little irregular at the upper end. From the view-point we look straight up the lake. On the L. a well-wooded bluff rises steeply from the water. At the far end, over a delightfully wooded hill, appears a distant view of Moel Siabod. The hills to the R. stand back more from the lake and are of an irregular rocky type. (A pleasant path leads back to Beddgelert, 2 m. distant, keeping the Glaslyn R. the whole way.)

Returning to the road, we ascend the valley, close to the lake. Presently Cynicht appears opposite, but now little more than a hump at the end of a long range. Soon after the lake is passed, there is a good retrospective view with Moel Hebog beyond. The road now bends slightly into the narrow and pretty valley of *Glan Aber*, with the small well-wooded Coed Eryr (R.), the opening of Cwmy Llan (L.), and the double front of Lliwedd towering in front. Near the bridge, by which the road passes the Glaslyn, Y Wyddfa appears for a moment L. After the bridge the road soon reaches the foot of the second lake, lying in the upper reach. *Llyn Gwynant* is somewhat larger than

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Llyn Ddinas, being nearly 1 m. in length, and lying 217 ft. above sea-level. The view up it well shows its nearly perfect oval shape. On the L. it is fringed with lovely trees, over which towers the tremendous precipitous slope of Gallt-y-Wenallt, the E. bastion of Lliwedd. On the R. are wooded slopes connected with Moel Meirch, one of the range of the irregular "hummocky" hills between Moel Siabod and Cynicht.

The road now skirts the lake. When it is nearly passed, there is a grand retrospective view, since Yr Aran, showing its finest cone, stands in the centre of the surrounding mountains, while somewhat further off, Moel Hebog grandly lifts itself above the lower wooded hills in front. This is perhaps the best view of the lake. Nant Gwynant itself now calls for attention, a lovely verdant strath, deep-set in the very heart of the rugged mountains. At its head it runs up both sides of the little Moel Perfydd, beyond which stands the great wall of the Glyders. The well-engineered road climbs gradually up the E. side of the valley. The retrospective views of valley and lake grow finer and finer as we ascend, the lake assuming a triangular shape, due to foreshortening. When we are about a mile from Pen y Gwryd, perhaps the best near view of Snowdon to be gained from a high road unfolds itself. We look right up Cwm Duli, at the head of which is the glorious cone of Y Wyddfa, flanked by Lliwedd (L.) and Crib y Ddysgl and Crib Goch (R.). In the valley below us, at the exit of Cwm Duli, is the power station, which has robbed the infant Glaslyn for the time of most of its waters. The road soon finishes its long 3 m. climb out of the valley to Pen y Gwryd Hotel (p. 152), from which it is 4 m. R. to Capel Curig, and 6½ m. L. to Llanberis.

4. *Beddgelert to Carnarvon* (13 m.).—The first 3 m.



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are up the Colwyn valley, which is shorter and less interesting than the Glaslyn. The river runs in a pretty bed L. of the road. Beyond it is a grand view of Moel Hebog and Moel Llefn. In front stands the commencement of the Y Garnedd Goch range, and on the R. Y Graig Wen shows a sloping side. In about 2 m. a rock is passed with "*Llam Trwsgyll*" (*i.e.* "the Giant's Step") painted on it. There is an obscure legend that a giant once strode across the chasm in which the river runs, leaving the impress of his boot on the opposite rock, where it may still be seen, picked out in whitewash. A little further we cross the Colwyn, which turns up R. to its source under the precipices of Snowdon in Cwm Caragog. All this while the road has been gradually ascending, and we are now crossing a desolate upland moor, which forms a low watershed between the valleys of the Colwyn and the Gwyrfai. Snowdon is full in view to the R. with Cwm Caragog displayed, showing the Llechog (S.W.) ridge L., Yr Aran (R.), and Y Wyddfa further off in the centre. At 3 m. we reach the summit level at the large rock called *Pitt's Head*, which shows a quasi-human profile, with a sharp-pointed nose, somewhat resembling that of the younger Pitt. As we proceed, we pass L. a largish round tarn called Llyn y Gader, which lies ineffectively on the open moorland at the foot of Mynydd Drws-y-Coed, the first mountain of the Y Garnedd Goch range. The tarn is the source of the Gwyrfai, into the valley of which stream we gradually descend. At $3\frac{3}{4}$ m. we reach *Rhyd-ddu* ("black ford"), where there is Snowdon station, the termination of the light railway from Carnarvon, and one of the favourite points for commencing the ascent of Snowdon. It is a good mountain centre in other ways, since from it may be climbed Mynydd Mawr

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and the Y Garnedd Goch range, or the narrow pass traversed called Drws-y-Coed (p. 260). After leaving the village, the road again descends a little beside the Gwyrfaï and reaches *Llyn Cwellyn*, a fine oval sheet of water, $1\frac{1}{4}$ m. long and 450 ft. above sea-level. It shows well from the hill-slopes which command it, but from near at hand it is less effective, owing to the absence of a mountain background both at its head and its foot. As the road winds along its E. shore, the view of it improves, for Mynydd Mawr rises grandly from its opposite bank, forming the striking precipice of Craig Cwm Bychan, on the top of which there are said to be traces of an ancient fort, Castell Cidwm. Nearly opposite the centre of the lake we pass the *Snowdon Ranger Hotel*. (For rest of the route see p. 193.)

5. *Nant-y-Mor*.—This is the valley of a little stream that runs in a general S.W. direction to the Traeth Mawr, about 2 m. E. of Beddgelert. Though somewhat in miniature, the valley is delightful and worth a ramble. It can be struck about 3 m. from Beddgelert. Rather more than $\frac{1}{4}$ m. after crossing Aberglaslyn bridge, leave the road for a rough mountain road L., which reaches Nant y Mor in $1\frac{1}{2}$ m. Here cross the bridge and take up the valley. The lower part is thickly wooded on both sides; then follow craggy hills, diversified with rocky, wooded knolls; and at last the upper valley, a shallow basin lying among low hills, into which the stream descends from the high-placed tarns of Llyn yr Adar and Llyn Llgi (R.). The road now crosses a low watershed, and turning R. just N. of Llyn y Ddinas, joins the main road 3 m. from Beddgelert. The whole round is about 11 m., but a short cut saving $1\frac{1}{2}$ m. may be taken to the foot of Llyn y Ddinas.

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6. *Beddgelert to the Ffestiniog Valley*.—Different stations on the Ffestiniog valley railway (pp. 268-271) can be reached from Beddgelert by four routes.

(1) By mountain path to Tan-y-Grisiau station (8½ m.).

(2) By mountain road to Tan-y-Bwlch station (8 m.).

(3) By the old road to Tan-y-Bwlch station (10 m.).

(4) By the carriage road to Penrhyn station (9 m.).

If the tourist wishes to go by cycle or carriage, there is no alternative to (4), for the saving of 2 m., which (3) involves, does not compensate for the roughness of the road. (1) and (2) are simply rough mountain foot tracks, but have far finer scenery than the other routes, though somewhat spoilt by quarrying.

(1) This route climbs to the head of Cwm Croesor, between Moelwyn and Cynicht. Since it is probable that most tourists will prefer to take the extra labour of climbing one or the other of these mountains, a full account of the scenery is postponed until they are described (p. 252). For the first 3 m. the route is that to Nant-y-Mor (p. 244). After climbing out of the valley, the road degenerates to an open track, which gradually ascends the slopes of Cynicht, but presently turns R., passes over a spur of that mountain, and descends to the village of Croesor in the jaws of the cwm. Here turn L. and ascend the cwm by the *lower* track, under the slopes of Moelwyn (R.) until Bwlch Cwm Orthin is reached (1400), the head of a valley which descends by the large tarn Llyn Cwm Orthin to the Tan-y-Grisiau station. The whole of the descent is spoilt by quarries.

(2) This route is identical with the first, until Cwm Croesor is reached, when instead of turning L. go straight on. The path first ascends, crossing a shoulder

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of Moelwyn, and passes across the mouth of the great cwm between Moelwyn and Moelwyn Bach. The highest point is 851 ft. The views over the Traeth Mawr, its surrounding mountains, and the sea are very fine. Further off are Harlech Castle and the Rhinog mountains. A long and gradual drop is made to Tan-y-Bwlch station, $2\frac{1}{2}$ m. from Cwm Croesor.

(3) and (4) For most of the way these two routes are the same. Take the road to Aberglaslyn, cross the bridge, and continue on the main road. After crossing one little hill the road is level, across the Traeth Mawr. There are splendid views of the grand mountains which stand up on all sides, Moel Ddu and Moel Hebog (W.), Y Wyddfa with Yr Aran and Lliwedd (N.), and Cynicht and Moelwyn (N.E.). (The best views are got when riding the reverse way from Penrhyn.) When Borrow walked along this road he was lavish in his praises of Cynicht, which he calls "a wonderful conical hill impaling heaven." Moelwyn he calls "a huge lumpish hill." 3 m. after leaving Aberglaslyn we reach the mouth of Nant-y-Mor, and in another mile that of Cwm Croesor, up both of which there are beautiful views. In another mile, at the hamlet of Pen y Gyffiniau, route (3) branches off to the L. The road is not to be recommended. It passes over the Bwlch-y-Maen, 486 ft. (somewhat lower than its namesake on Snowdon!), and descends to Tan-y-Bwlch station. The main road goes on to Penrhyn, first passing the station, then descending to the little town in the valley below.

III. *THE BEDDGELERT MOUNTAINS.* 1. *Craig y Llan* (900).—The short climb up this fine little precipice is interesting and delightful. Cross the Glaslyn by the wooden bridge just below the waters-meet, and turn up the hill to the R. of the row of cottages

in front. There is a good though steep path, marked by a line of white cairns, which are continued at intervals along the ridge R. until the top. From the ridge there is perhaps the best view of Beddgelert village and valley lying directly below, with the Colwyn valley behind. By slightly changing the point of view the Glaslyn valley with Llyn y Ddinas may be overlooked. The top nearly commands the pass, and shows a grand circle of mountains. Craig y Llan itself is seen to be the W. escarpment of a group of bossy hills filling up the gap between the Glaslyn valley, Llyn Ddinas, Nant y Mor, and Traeth Mawr. The most interesting continuation of the walk is to follow the cliff and descend at Aberglaslyn. The views down the pass from the top of the vertical cliffs are most fascinating. Care is of course required, but there need be no danger. When the cliffs cease, a scrambling descent can be found down the broken S. edge to Pont Aberglaslyn. This, too, with care will prove neither difficult nor dangerous.

2. *Yr Aran* (2451).—This peak is sometimes considered the S. buttress of Snowdon, but it stands well apart from the rest of the group, and may well claim to be a separate mountain. To the S. a narrow ridge descends to Y Graig Wen, where it broadens out awhile, and then, narrowing again, descends straight to Beddgelert, ending in the effective little precipices which directly overhang the village. The visitor to Beddgelert will probably first think of taking a ramble on these rocks. This, however, he will not find as easy as it looks, for they are protected by the houses which abut against them, and have in addition high walls and wire entanglements. It is necessary to go some way up the Glaslyn valley before a feasible approach can be made.

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The *ascent* of Yr Aran can be made either from Beddgelert itself, or from a point on the Nant Gwynant road, a little short of Dinas Emrys. The following description ascends by the first route and descends by the second. From the Colwyn bridge start by the Carnarvon road, but almost directly turn R., between the chapel and the Saracen's Head, cross a field at the back of the house, and turn into a path L., which leads through a plantation to a farm. Go through the farm buildings, turn R., and almost immediately L., and the way up Y Graig Wen is straight ahead. (This point can also be reached by going up the Nant Gwynant road, and turning in through a gate just before a prominent detached bluff overhangs the road. The track rounds the bluff and runs into the former track. The bluff itself, though defended by a high wall, is worth a short digression, both for its steepness and for the fine view it commands of the lower Glaslyn valley up to Llyn Ddinas.)

The broad steep side of Y Graig Wen (1925) has now to be climbed. A more gradual ascent follows through two gates and over a wall. The graceful cone of Yr Aran is now straight ahead. There is a slight depression, followed by a long walk up a narrow ridge to the cairn with precipices L. The summit is one of the narrowest and most abrupt in Snowdonia. On the W. precipices with screes below them sink directly to the upland moor on which Llyn y Gader lies. Straight ahead N. the mountain suddenly breaks off and falls by another line of precipices into the depths of Cwm y Llan, on the far side of which is a grand vision of Y Wyddfa and Lliwedd, with Glyder Fawr appearing over the Bwlch y Saethau. The proximity of Snowdon limits the view N. On the E. there is

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a beautiful view of Llyn Gwynant and Nant Gwynant, with Moel Siabod beyond. Then come the bossy hills leading by Moel Meirch to Cynicht and Moelwyn. To the S. on clear days the view stretches to the Arans and Cader Idris, which are in view from all the Beddgelert mountains. On the W. is the near view of the mountains Moel Ddu, Moel Hebog, Y Garnedd Goch, Mynydd Mawr, and Moel Eilio, with the Rivals and Carnarvon more in the distance.

The ramble may be continued to the top of Snowdon. From the N. shoulder of the mountain the tourist can descend to the Bwlch y Llan beside a wall, which safely avoids the precipices to the R. and the L. The drop of 800 ft. to the lowest part of the "Bwlch" is doubtless the reason why this route is not included among the ordinary ways up Snowdon. The ascent continues with the wall due N. along the ridge, passing a slate quarry and reservoir L. to the Bwlch-y-Maen, p. 217.

To *descend* to the Nant Gwynant road, take straight down the steep face of the mountain in a direction S. by E. Presently we reach the stream descending from the depression between Yr Aran and Y Graig Wen, beside which a path leads down to the road ($1\frac{1}{4}$ m. from Beddgelert).

For the start in its reverse direction leave the Nant Gwynant road L., just before Dinas Emrys is reached. At the far end of a field a stream is passed. There is now a choice of routes, either L. beside the stream, or to the R. Both meet on the stream, $\frac{1}{2}$ m. further on. Here avoid the plainer track to the R., which only leads to disused quarries, and take the track straight up the slope beside the branch of the stream (L.)

3. *MOEL HEOG* ("Hawk's mountain") (2566).—This stands up so grandly W. of the Beddgelert valley,

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that many will wish to climb it. It has a rocky top and a steep E. side, without being absolutely precipitous. What appears from below to be the summit has a cairn, but the real summit lies more to the L. out of sight. Just R. of the apparent summit is a slight notch for which all climbers must aim. A little more R. is the top of a fine precipitous cwm facing N.E., and enclosed by two long arms, up the nearer of which the route lies. The climb starts at the foot of the mountain at a farm called *Cwm Cloch*, to which three tracks lead. (1) Proceed for rather more than $\frac{1}{4}$ m. on the Carnarvon road, and turn L. by a bridge over the Colwyn, labelled "No Thoroughfare," apparently a meaningless remark. This leads into a lane which takes us straight to the farm. (2) Start by a path just N. of the Royal Goat Hotel, and, directly after passing the new light railway, turn R. into a track parallel with it. Presently this turns L., and runs into the lane mentioned in (1). (3) The shortest path is to start from the Royal Goat, keep straight on after passing the railway, cross a step-stile R., about half-way across the second field beyond the railway, and follow a path leading straight to the farm. It seems, however, that the farmer considers this path private. When the farm is reached, there is no further difficulty. The path turns somewhat R., and then ascends the ridge already mentioned. It is marked by a plain line of white cairns. When near the top, turn a little L. to avoid the precipices R., and scramble by a steep ascent among rocks to the notch formerly mentioned. Here turn L. and, passing the first cairn, continue to the second and higher one.

The best feature of the view is not visible from quite the highest point, *i.e.* the oval valley of Beddgelert itself, with Nant Gwynant fully displayed beyond,

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showing the whole of Llyn y Ddinas and part of Llyn Gwynant. Behind all stands Moel Siabod. Then comes the ridge leading up to Yr Aran, with Snowdon nearly behind it, a perfectly magnificent group of peaks. Elidyr Fawr appears between Moel Eilio and Y Wyddfa. More L. is the Gwyrfai valley, with Llyn y Gader and Llyn Dywarchen. Still further L. is Mynydd Mawr, the long line of Y Garnedd Goch, showing 5 peaks, and further off the Rivals. The Llyn peninsula (S.W.) is to be seen in much detail, and the whole of the coast round by Portmadoc to Cardigan Bay. In front is the Traeth Mawr, with Moelwyn and Cynicht rising L. of it, the latter mountain not showing its best shape. There is not much variation to be got in the descent to Beddgelert, but we may (1) traverse the ridge to the N.W., under which is said to be a cave traditionally associated with Owain Glyndwr. The ridge leads to *Moel Llefn* (2094), by traversing which and descending N. we shall strike into a path which leads R. to the Carnarvon road, about 2 m. from Beddgelert, (2) or descend the E. spur till the path mentioned on p. 252 is struck.

4. *Moel Ddŷ* (1811) forms the summit of the finely wooded and precipitous cliff, which bounds the Traeth Mawr on the W. Though not often ascended, it certainly deserves to be, for it affords a more uninterrupted view of the sea than any other Snowdonian mountain. To ascend it walk to Aberglaslyn, and take the Portmadoc road. Nearly a mile further the Glaslyn, which has left the road awhile, comes back close to it. Here take a cart track, which leaves the road R. First it ascends beside a brook, but just above the last of some cascades turns L., away from it, then again turns R., and presently crosses the brook again. Here take a pathway L., with the stream L.

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Where the path passes into a wood, do not cross the stream at once, but wait till rocks appear in front ; then cross, and continue the climb in the same direction, keeping a little L. of the stream, till at last a gate will be reached which leads out of the wood on to the open hillside. All is now clear. Moel Ddu appears close on the L., and the top is reached after a stiff climb up a rocky front. There are two summits of about equal height. The view is very like that from Moel Hebog, but it has two important special features. First we have in front the strangely attractive flats of the Traeth Mawr, surrounded by a beautiful fringe of woodlands, and forming a most effective foreground for the great mountains which rise beyond. The other feature is the splendid coast view, where note especially the Lleyn peninsula, with all its fascinating "tumpy" hills, St Tudwal's Islands, Pwllheli, Criccieth and its Castle, Portmadoc, and Harlech with its Castle. A pleasant walk back to Beddgelert may be made over the hills. Descend the mountain N., and continue in that direction. The first track struck leads off N.E., and should not be taken. Continue N. till a second track comes in L. and joins our path. Soon we cross a stream, ascend a little, and work round a long projecting spur of Moel Hebog. Here a beautiful view of Beddgelert appears in front, to which we descend gradually, finally passing into a wood, and reaching the road a little S. of the new railway bridge. The path is carefully marked with cairns.

5. *CYNICHT* (2268) and *MOELWYN* (2527).—The frequent mention of these mountains in previous descriptions will show their interest and importance. They stand between the Beddgelert and Ffestiniog valleys, but nearer to the latter, into which indeed the E. side of Moelwyn drops. Nevertheless there



CYNICHT FROM TRAETH MAWR

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is reason for classing them under Beddgelert rather than Ffestiniog, since the most interesting ascents are from that direction, and the mountains, as we have seen (p. 237), turn their best sides to the Traeth Mawr. They are separated by the deep-set Cwm Croesor, which runs far up between them with grand effect. From Ffestiniog the ascents are less interesting (p. 274), since the better features of the mountains are not seen *en route*, and their E. side has been knocked to pieces by the Ffestiniog quarries. There are quarries and tram-lines in Cwm Croesor as well, but the havoc is far worse on the Ffestiniog side.

Cynicht may be compared with the Langdale Pikes in Lakeland. On one side it is perhaps the most shapely mountain in Snowdonia—its only possible rivals being Snowdon, Elidyr Fawr, and Tryfaen—but on the other it degenerates into a sort of “tump,” the end of a dull line of heights which are hardly of inferior elevation. Obviously, therefore, it should be ascended from its best side, *i.e.* from Beddgelert. The road to it is that which leads to Nant y Mor (p. 244). Climb straight on out of the valley by a plain mountain track. First the craggy Yr Arrdu is in front, which we presently skirt to the R., and then ascend gradually. Moelwyn first reappears, and then *Cynicht*. The road bends still more R., and ascends to the top of the long arm which *Cynicht* stretches down to the Traeth Mawr. Here turn L. and commence the ascent. At first the ridge is broad and level, and two walls, defended by barbed wire, have to be negotiated. Then, passing a few rocks, we reach a narrow col, and are on the ridge of *Cynicht* itself. The climb is steep and laborious, over slippery grass and rocks, but there is no difficulty until just before the final ascent, when a perpendicular rock bars progress in front. This

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can be rounded by a scramble R., and in 5 min. more we are on the narrow top, where there is but little standing room.

As a view-point Cynicht is somewhat disappointing. This is due to the wilderness of uninteresting hills of a "hummocky" type, which lie N.E. and E., between us and Moel Siabod. A characteristic feature which partly redeems these uplands, is the large number of small tarns which rest among them, often in quite elevated basins, but which individually are for the most part uninteresting. To the N.W. and S.W. the view is better. N.W. rises the majestic Snowdon, with all its attendant peaks, and Cwm y Llan fully displayed. In front are part of Llyn y Ddinas, Glan Aber, and the upper part of Nant Gwynant, over which stand the Glyders. S.W. we look down the opening of the Cwm Croesor to Traeth Mawr, with Portmadoc, the estuaries of the Dwyryd and the Glaslyn, and the sea beyond.

Cynicht to Moelwyn.—Between the two summits there is an interval, as the crow flies, of $1\frac{1}{2}$ m. But for the pedestrian this involves a tiresome and circuitous route over rough ground, which may take quite 2 hrs. The "bee-line" plan involves a very steep descent over scree into the depths of Cwm Croesor, and will commend itself to few. The alternative is to continue on the ridge of Cynicht for about $\frac{1}{2}$ m. to the N.E., and then to cross or skirt without any path a small valley on the R. (an upland branch of Cwm Croesor). A slight ascent on the far side leads to a rough upland plateau with a few scattered tarns called Llyniau Diffwys. This has to be crossed, and another descent made to the Bwlch Cwm Orthin (1427), the pass between Cwm Croesor and the Ffestiniog valley. Beyond lies Moelwyn, a climb of exactly

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1100 ft. First we pass Llyn Croesor, a small, but well-placed tarn, with the precipices of Moelwyn towering behind it. Then follows a steady climb up a grassy ridge to the top.

To ascend *Moelwyn from Beddgelert* take the path leading past Nant y Mor, but instead of leaving it at the top of the spur of Cynicht, continue the descent into Cwm Croesor (about 5 m. from Beddgelert). The Cwm is a deep-set, V-shaped valley, with Cynicht and Moelwyn facing each other at the end of the opposing ridges. Turn L. and take the *upper* of the two roads. Before a quarry is reached, leave the road and climb diagonally to the R. till the summit level is attained. Although the mountain is generally speaking of a rounded shape, there is a large "bite" (see p. 207) taken out of it to the N., so that the final climb is along a narrower ridge than that of Cynicht, with tremendous precipices L., and a steep slope R. To the R. is also *Moelwyn Bach* (2334), higher than Cynicht, with a beautiful tarn, *Llyn Trwstyllon*, lying between the two mountains in a cwm facing E. The *view* is nearly the same as from Cynicht. Snowdon is directly over Cynicht itself, which hides Nant Gwynant. The one new feature is the view into the Ffestiniog valley, with the Manods opposite, and both Ffestiniog village and Blaenau Ffestiniog in view.

The descents to Beddgelert and Ffestiniog will be obvious from directions already given.

6. *Y GARNEDD GOCH RANGE* (2408). — This mountain range is in many respects remarkable. It starts in a line with Moel Hebog, Mynydd Mawr and the other heights which rise to the W. of the depression leading from Beddgelert to Carnarvon. But instead of consisting of one mountain, like the other parts of the chain, it stretches out S.W. in a long range, pushing

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out between the valleys of *Nantlle* and *Dwyfawr* into the flatter W. part of Carnarvonshire, and thus forming the most W. part of the Snowdon group. The range is a splendid climbing-ground, for the tourist passes with comparative ease from height to height, amid a succession of fantastic rock-forms, and with tremendous precipices to the N. There is, unfortunately, a teasing uncertainty as to the identity and nomenclature of the various summits.

Starting from Rhyd-ddu ($3\frac{3}{4}$ m. from Beddgelert), the best plan is to take the Nantlle road for a short distance, until a track leads L. to a farm, behind which the open hillside may be gained. A stiff climb lands us on the first point of the range, called in the Ordnance map Y Garn. The cairn is close to an awful ravine, running straight from the top to the Drws-y-Coed Pass, just below, from which rise opposite the vertical precipices of Mynydd Mawr. There is a beautiful view of the Beddgelert valley, with the lakes of Cwellyn, Dywarchen, and Y Gader at our feet, and beyond one of the grandest views of Snowdon looking up Cwm Clogwyn. The climb to the second point requires a little care. It is along a charming, narrow ridge, with rough and broken rocks L., and tremendous precipices R. At the harder parts we may descend a little L. The top is apparently nameless, as the name Mynydd Drws-y-Coed seems to apply to the first three points collectively. The long green Dwyfawr valley now appears L., between Y Garnedd Goch itself and Moel Hebog. A slight descent and a longer climb leads to *Trum-y-Ddysgl* (2329), the third point. The grand precipices R. are striking the whole way. In spite of their steepness, they are clothed throughout in bilberry, heather, and moss, which gives them a strange appearance. From the top a beautiful and

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extensive sea-view bursts on the eye, and the whole panorama is now splendid. We now descend a green slope, at the head of the Dwyfawr valley, and passing a curiously narrow edge, ascend again to a somewhat lower fourth point, Mynydd Tal-y-Mignedd (2148), which boasts a cairn 20 ft. high. A much more serious depression follows, and Y Garnedd Goch itself faces us, an apparently formidable task. On the L., extending to the depression, is the precipitous N.E. cwm, an obviously impracticable route. It is necessary, therefore, to descend a little R., and climb *Craig Cwm Silin*, amid a chaotic wilderness of rocks and huge boulders. The roughness of the mountain makes the ascent very laborious, and at the topmost point (2408) the general effect is not unlike that of Scawfell Pikes. From the lower ground, *e.g.* near Carnarvon, Y Garnedd Goch appears as a very long flat-topped mountain, with the two ends slightly higher than the flatter middle part. We are now at the top of Craig Cwm Silin at the N.E. end. The Ordnance map places the summit cairn at the S.W. end (2301). But the point we are now on has the advantage by over 100 ft., and is certainly the real mountain-top.

The *view* is one of the finest and most varied in Snowdonia. To the S. and W. is the flat country, broken only by the conical peaks of the Gyrns and Rivals (S.W.), and ringed by the silver sea, which stretches from Holyhead, round by the Lleyn peninsula, to Harlech and then far S. into Cardigan Bay. In the other direction, there is in view, between Mynydd Mawr (nearly N), and Moel Hebog (S.E.), as grandly massed a group of mountains as Snowdonia can present. The peaks and hollows of Snowdon itself form a magnificent centre-piece, with Glyder Fawr showing over a ridge on the L., and Moel Siabod appearing

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between Lliwedd and Yr Aran (R.). To the L. of Snowdon, starting from Moel Eilio, just behind Mynydd Mawr, we have in order from L. to R. the Elidyr, Y Foel Goch, and Y Garn, while further off is the grand group of Carnedd Llewelyn and Carnedd Dafydd. R. of Snowdon are Cynicht and Moelwyn, with the Arenigs, and other far-off mountains beyond. The only lakes visible are the Llyniau Cwm Silin, under the N.W. slope of our mountain, and the Nantlle lakes a little further off.

Descents from Y Garnedd Goch (Craig Cwm Silin).

(1) To *Pant-glas station*.—This descent has the advantage of walking over the whole of the mountain, which would hardly be worth while if the tourist had to return to Rhyd-ddu or Beddgelert. Continue along the ridge (S.W.), first keeping level, then slightly descending and ascending again to the official top of Y Garnedd Goch, according to the maps (2301). From here descend S. to the Bwlch Cwm Dulyn, where notice Llyn Cwm Dulyn, and, turning R., ascend again to Mynydd Craig Goch (1986), the last point on the range. A descent S.W. leads to the Carnarvon to Portmadoc road, not far from the turn to Pant-glas station (for Carnarvon, Criccieth, or Portmadoc).

(2) To *Rhyd-ddu (Snowdon station)*.—Return to the depression between Y Garnedd Goch and Mynydd Tal-y-Mignedd, and then turn R. into the Dwyfawr valley. Skirt round its head, and presently descend to some disused mine works. Then climb out of the valley in a slanting direction by a miners' track nearly due E. Continue in the same direction, and a track will be struck, which leads from the Dwyfawr valley to Rhyd-ddu. Turn L. and follow the track, which crosses the stream from Cwm Du, ascends again a little, and then descends more or less towards

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Llyn y Gader, but finally passes well L. of it to Rhyd-ddu.

(3) *To Beddgelert direct*—(a) Take the route to the disused mine works, as in the last section, and then skirt the E. side of the Dwyfawr valley, keeping quite level for about $\frac{3}{4}$ m., until the point is struck where the track from Rhyd-ddu, mentioned in the last section, joins another track. Turn L. up this other track, which leads across a pass to the N. of Moel Llefn, joining the Beddgelert road at Hafod Ruffydd, nearly 2 m. from Beddgelert. (b) A somewhat longer but perhaps plainer route is to continue on the Rhyd-ddu track until the stream from Cwm Du is passed, soon after which a cart road diverges R. leading to the Beddgelert road at Pitt's Head, 3 m. from Beddgelert.

7. *Mynydd Mawr* (2290) is an impressive bulky mountain with splendid precipices dropping S. into the Drws-y-Coed valley, and N. and N.E. to Llyn Cwellyn. It is sometimes called the Elephant Mountain.

The natural ascent is by the long arm the mountain sends down E., but *Llyn Dywarchen* and the precipitous little hill, which rises so strangely from it, stand in the way, and must be passed either L. or R. (a) Starting from Rhyd-ddu by the Nanlle road, turn R. in a mile and passing W. of Llyn Dywarchen, which forms an effective foreground for the Snowdon view, cross the slight depression leading to Mynydd Mawr. Climb the steep slope in front, bearing a little R. to the ridge, from which there is the best view of Llyn Cwellyn. (b) Starting from Snowdon Ranger take the Rhyd-ddu road till Llyn Cwellyn is passed. Just after crossing a bridge turn R. through a gate to a farm. When past the farm take the path up the hill L., which passes a little R. of the N. branch of Llyn Dywarchen, and leads straight up the ridge, joining

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the former route on the top. When the shoulder is attained, a tremendous grassy cwm opens R. This has to be skirted by a narrow ridge, with precipices L., falling vertically to the Drws-y-Coed valley. In two places the path runs close to the precipice, and affords grand views down it. At last we turn R., and walk up a stone-strewn slope to the cairn. The view is an exceedingly fine one but differs little from those from Moel Eilio and Y Garnedd Goch (pp. 208, 257). Note, however, the long precipitous range of Y Garnedd Goch itself S., and the beautiful view of Tryfaen, showing over the shoulder of Glyder Fawr.

Descents. (1) *To the N.*—Skirt on the W. side the precipitous Cwm Du which opens N., and then descend the slope, either making N. for Bettws Garmon station, or striking into a path which works round W. to Nant Mill. (2) *To the W.*—Here an easy descent will take us down to Nantlle, striking the road L. near the beginning of the lake. Though both village and lake are without attractions, yet the tourist is recommended to take this descent, and finish the ramble by the glorious walk back to Rhyd-ddu by *Drws-y-Coed* (from 4 m. to 5 m.). The valley is a narrow cleft between two tremendous walls of rock, *i.e.* the precipices of Mynydd Mawr (N.) and of Y Garnedd Goch (S.). In front all the way is the Clogwyn view of Snowdon. The painter Wilson chose this point of view for his celebrated picture of the greatest of Welsh mountains. The road ascends to a height of 780 ft. by Llyn Dywarchen, and then descends rapidly to Rhyd-ddu.

N.B.—The rambles on Y Garnedd Goch and Mynydd Mawr, also those on Moel Eilio, are very accessible by railway from Carnarvon (Ch. X.).

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CHAPTER XIV

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[*Approaches*—(a) From Conway and Bettws-y-Coed (road and railway), pp. 134, 137; (b) from Beddgelert (road and path), p. 245; (c) branch railway from Bala—a line with few trains, and which reaches an altitude of 1200 ft.; (d) G.W.R. via Barmouth, changing at Mynffordd Junction to narrow gauge for Blaenau Ffestiniog.]

I. 1. THE Ffestiniog district, the last outlying part of Snowdonia on the S.E., is really the valley of the little river *Dwryd*. It lies to the S. of the extensive mountain mass including Moelwyn and Cynicht, which, running E. at a high elevation, connects Snowdonia with the Merioneth tableland. The head of the Dwryd valley is sunk deeply into the S. of this high ground, nearly opposite to the head of the Lledr valley to the N. of it. The numerous rills, which leap down the mountain sides from the lofty plateau, soon form a beautiful stream of considerable size. On the W. of the valley are high mountains, which are really the lower slopes of Cynicht, Moelwyn, and Moelwyn Bach, though these three mountain tops are well in the rear, and do not show their full proportions to the valley. On the E. side the slope leading to the Manods is less steep. About 3 m. down the valley, its course changes very decidedly to W.S.W., and a large affluent, the Cynfael, descends to join the main stream from a beautiful glen on the E. Strictly speaking, the main stream up to this point is the Afon Goedol, but after the junction with the Cynfael it

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becomes the Dwyryd (*i.e.* "two ford river"), the road crossing both streams successively. In the angle between the two streams is an isolated hill of over 600 ft., on the very top of which, and commanding a beautiful view of the lower part of the valley, is the original town or village of Ffestiniog, now usually called *Ffestiniog Village*, to distinguish it from the larger Blaenau (*i.e.* Upper) Ffestiniog at the head of the valley.

The valley from this point to where the Dwyryd runs into the sea by a small estuary, is the celebrated *Vale of Ffestiniog*, sometimes also called the Vale of Maentwrog, from the little village about halfway down it, where its beauties come to a climax. Its full description may be postponed for a little, but at present it is enough to say that this fair valley is a worthy rival of those of the Lledr, the Llugwy, and the Glaslyn.

2. But unfortunately one more detail has to be added to the picture. King Slate has once again asserted his rule. As the visitor by the railway from Bettws-y-Coed emerges from the tunnel, which joins the heads of the Lledr and Ffestiniog valleys, he finds himself at once at the ugly but flourishing slate town of *Blaenau Ffestiniog*, which has almost robbed the original Ffestiniog of its name. On all the surrounding mountains are the evidences of extensive quarrying and mining; in fact the damage is so uncompromising, that the first 3 m. of the valley, down to the turn, may be entirely given up for tourist purposes. It is indeed hardly possible now even to reconstruct in imagination the original appearance of the head of the valley. Whatever beauties it once had, are quite gone. However, we have to be very thankful for two things. First, the evidences of the destruction wrought by

quarrying do not extend beyond the turn into the lower valley, which still remains in unspoilt loveliness ; and, secondly, a railway has been constructed above the W. side of the valley, by which the slate may be conveyed to Portmadoc. This is the celebrated *toy railway*, which, though its cause was commercial, has become famous for its scenery, and should be travelled on by all who wish to learn the full charm of this corner of Snowdonia.

3. *The two Ffestiniogs*.—Blaenau Ffestiniog needs no further description, since, unless the visitor wishes to explore a slate quarry (fee 5s.), his one desire will be to leave as soon as possible. This the complexity of the railway lines renders a little difficult. There are three railway stations in the little town and all three are termini. W. is the L. and N.W.R. station, which leads N. through a tunnel to Bettws-y-Coed and Conway. About $\frac{1}{4}$ m. E. is the G.W.R. station, leading to Ffestiniog village (4 m. distant) and onwards to Bala. Close to this station, and a little N. of it, is Duffws station, the terminus of the narrow gauge railway leading to Portmadoc. Duffws is merely a suburb of Blaenau Ffestiniog. The narrow gauge railway also has a station adjoining the L. and N.W.R. station.

Ffestiniog Village is 4 m. by rail and $3\frac{1}{2}$ m. by road from Blaenau Ffestiniog. Both rail and road continue the whole way on a high level, but from the valley below there is a steep and winding road, which ascends 600 ft. in $1\frac{1}{2}$ m. The situation of the town on its isolated hilltop is splendid and far-seen, the air good, the houses clean and well-built. The village, however, is not picturesque, being, like so many places in N. Wales, largely spoilt by the slate roofs. The quarries fortunately stop before reaching it. There

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is no view from the streets, but close to the church (restored) there is a magnificent panorama. The whole of the lovely vale of Ffestiniog is spread at our feet, with the Dwyryd gleaming at intervals, and presently expanding into a fair estuary. To the L. is the deep-set glen of the Cynfael, with the green upland country beyond, over which the Rhinogs rise at some distance. To the R. are Moelwyn Bach and Moelwyn, and the rest of the high mountain plateau, which stretches round the head of the valley to join the Manods. Cynicht is not seen, being hid behind the less familiar mountains in front, which are almost of the same elevation. The quarries are almost hidden, and thus do not spoil the effect.

It was surely rather of the valley than of the village that Lord Lyttleton was thinking in his oft-quoted letter: "With the woman one loves, with the friend of one's heart, and a good library of books, one may pass an age here and think it a day. If one has a mind to live long and renew his youth, let him come and settle at Ffestiniog."

II. 1. *Blaenau Ffestiniog to Ffestiniog* (4 m. rail, $3\frac{1}{2}$ m. road).—The road keeps on high ground over 700 ft. to the L. of the upper Ffestiniog valley. Houses are continuous for about half the route, Blaenau Ffestiniog being continued by the long village of Manod, under the slopes of Manod Bach. Then a road descends R. The Ffestiniog road keeps L., and soon crosses the railway. From the road the "Ffestiniog view," just described, is well seen, *i.e.* right down the beautiful vale of Ffestiniog to the sea, with Moelwyn and Moelwyn Bach (R.), the Manods (L.), and the Rhinogs showing S. over the plateau directly in front. Presently the road dips below 600 ft., to cross the valley of the Teigl or

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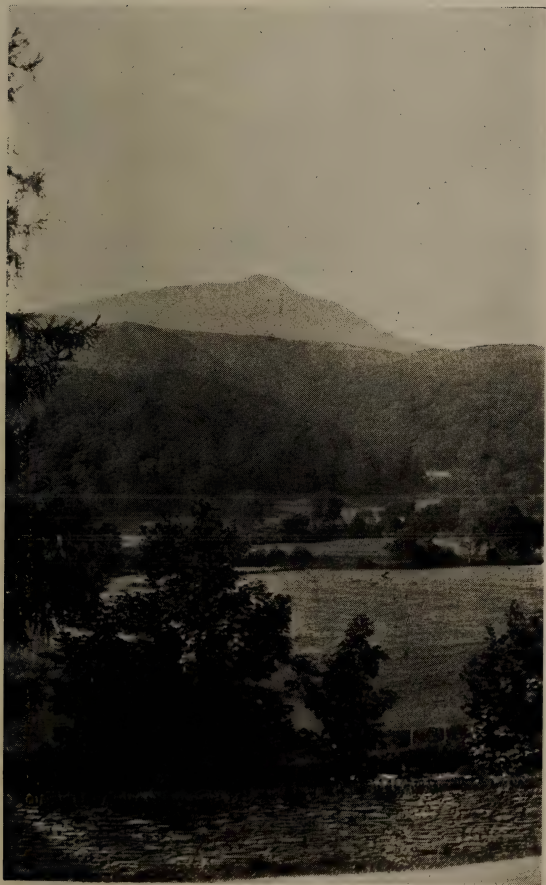
Tegwel, and ascends again to the hill on which Ffestiniog village is built.

The railway (starting from G.W.R. station) takes nearly the same course. When the road descends to the Teigl valley, it keeps on the higher ground L.

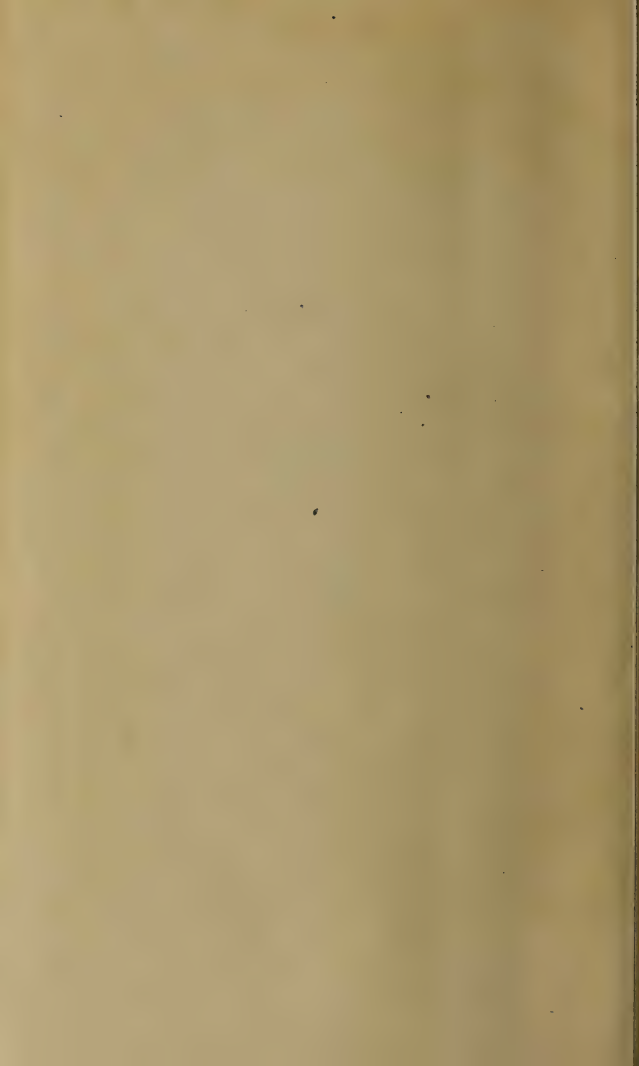
2. *The Cynfael Gorge*.—This may be called the chief rambling ground of Ffestiniog village. It is a deep-set and well-wooded glen, through which a rapidly descending stream has grooved a narrow channel among the rocks. There are two waterfalls to see, but the beauty of the gorge itself is the chief feature. It lies S. of the village, and the lower fall can easily be reached in 10 or 15 min. Start by a gate opposite the Newborough Arms. It looks like an entrance to a farm-yard, but a sign-post makes the entrance plain. Follow the obvious path, and do not be in a hurry to turn R. at once. In descending to the glen, note a beautiful view down the lower part of it, to where it joins the main valley. Presently the path, after passing a gate, turns parallel with the stream, and a little above it. After passing another gate, turn R. down to the stream by a plain track, and the *lower fall* is quite close. It is not high, but charmingly set in rocks, ferns, and trees. A bridge, from which it can be best seen, is or was (1913) unsafe. A little higher up note the view *down* the glen, where the stream has carved a narrow passage between two high perpendicular rocks, which almost touch at the top. The scene is, in miniature, like one below the Devil's Bridge near Aberystwyth. A rough path now leads up the stream on the N. bank. A little way up is *Hugh Lloyd's Pulpit*, a large isolated boulder with flat top, in mid-stream. The preacher, from whom it is named, lived in the 17th cent., and is variously stated to have been poet, soldier, and magician. The

path soon rejoins the main path, which crosses the stream by a bridge, and continues up the S. bank. Perpendicular rocks soon rise high on the N. bank. Presently a pathway leads down to the *Goat's Bridge*, a strange scene, where a gigantic rock-boulder has entirely blocked the channel, driving the stream through a narrow exit on the S. side, where it is crossed by a slab thrown across from the bank to the boulder. The views, both up and down stream, are lovely. A little further we reach the best view of the *upper fall*. This consists of a low upper cascade, seen in profile, followed by a longer sheer descent, which directly faces us. The rocks now are rising high on both sides and the whole setting of trees and ferns is exquisite, forming a complete picture. Just above the fall the wooded part of this delightful glen comes to an end.

3. *The Ffestiniog valley from Ffestiniog village to Penrhyn (7 m.).*—The first $1\frac{1}{2}$ m. is the descent of the rough and winding road into the valley. About half-way down there is a beautiful far-off peep (R.) of a waterfall below Dduallt, beautifully framed in woods. Directly we reach the level, we cross Pont Tal-y-Bont, a long causeway over the lower end of the Cynfael valley, up which (L.) there is a fine view. For the next two miles the road keeps well to the L., with beautiful glimpses of river and valley (R.). Then we cross the Dwyryd, just short of Maentwrog. This sweet spot is perhaps the loveliest in the valley, and will be a convenient place for describing its general features. The Dwyryd is remarkable for its abundant waters, considering the shortness of its course, and also for their purity, considering how its upper streams have been defiled by mine-washing. Looking down stream, there is a long straight reach, which appears



VALE OF FFESTINIOG WITH MOELWYN BACH



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at its best when sparkling under an afternoon sun. Looking up, we see Ffestiniog on its hill at the head of the valley, with Manod Mawr behind. The floor of the valley is flat, and of a rich green, with the river wandering at its will from side to side. The valley is U-shaped rather than V-shaped, so that at the side the hills rise steeply. They are not more than 500 ft. high, but are beautifully draped in wood throughout, and form a most effective setting. The little railway is quite hidden among the trees high up on the N.W. side. In some views from the L. side of the valley the craggy top of Moelwyn Bach peers over the wooded slopes. If, instead of crossing the bridge, we go straight on, in a few hundred yards we reach *Maentwrog*, the pretty village in the centre of the valley. It lies, if we may say so, just round the corner, nestling in an elbow of the valley, and sheltered by a tall steep rock, half-way up which is a thick line of Scotch firs, almost overhanging the village. The church has a sort of Sussex cap, which rises above a group of fine yews. There is, however, nothing really to see in the village, and these picturesque features are perhaps best observed from a little distance. If we now recross the bridge, and take the road to the far side of the valley, Maentwrog appears to decided advantage. We now slightly ascend to the Oakley Arms Hotel, a comfortable resting-place. Here the road forks, the R. branch leading to Tan-y-Bwlch station (p. 270); the L. continuing down the valley on the R.-hand side. For the next mile we are close under the magnificent grounds and forests of Plâs. Then the Dwyryd becomes tidal and in another half mile we leave it, passing over a low col into a parallel valley without interest. Another mile brings us to Penrhyn (really Penrhyn Deudraeth), a quarrymen's

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village of no interest, but with two railway stations. For Beddgelert turn R. (p. 246). The road continues straight to Mynffordd Junction, and then across the embankment (p. 236) to Portmadoc. From the embankment there is a first-rate view over the flat Traeth Mawr, with Moel Hebog, Snowdon, Cynicht, and Moelwyn rising in full majesty beyond. A third way of finishing the walk or ride is to turn L. at Penrhyn, cross the bridge over the estuary of the Dwyryd, and return to Ffestiniog village by the S.E. side of the valley. This takes us to the most S. point which can reasonably be considered to belong to Snowdonia. At 1 m. short of Maentwrog we cross the exit of the beautiful Rhaiadr-du glen (p. 271).

4. *The Ffestiniog narrow gauge railway.*—This is a remarkable instance in which a work of man, built without reference to the scenery, and likely to do it serious damage, has proved a great help to viewing it to advantage. The most fastidious traveller, even one of that small band who are so shocked by the Snowdon railway, will find here little to object to. The narrow line of the railway hardly shows among the thick-growing fir trees, through which its course mainly lies, and both engine and carriages are too small to be eyesores. Originally the line was a tramway, on which trucks, laden with slate, descended by gravitation the whole way from Blaenau Ffestiniog to Portmadoc, and were hauled up again when empty by horse traction. Presently the introduction of the bogie system allowed locomotive engines to be substituted, and a little later, in 1865, the line was opened for passenger traffic. It was soon acclaimed as one of the “wonders of Wales,” both for its peculiar character and the beauty of its scenery. Though the development of engineering science has ceased to make

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it remarkable in the first respect, it is still almost unique in the second, for a railway, unless specially constructed for scenic purposes, will naturally descend a valley in preference to being carried along the top of one of its flanking hills.

Starting from Blaenau Ffestiniog at a height of 700 ft., the railway reaches sea level at Portmadoc, after a course of 17 m. It is on a gradual slope the whole way, but the engineering is so careful that the steepest gradient is only 1 in 68. This has been effected in parts by a series of remarkable, and indeed sensational, curves. Travelling along them is one of the delights of the ride. Also, although the real height is only a few hundred feet, there is a general impression that we are being carried along the tops of the mountains; and, best of all, there is a continuous view of the beautiful vale of Ffestiniog, lying 400 or 500 ft. below on our L.

We start either from Duffws, the terminus, or from the L. & N.W.R. station, which is less than $\frac{1}{2}$ m. from it. The first stages are carried along the lower slopes of the Moelwyns. At *Tan-y-Grisiau*, the next station, three streams unite to form Afon Goedol (the name given to the upper waters of the Dwyryd). One is a copious streamlet which has so far accompanied us; a second descends in a fine cascade from Cwm Orthin (R.), the third flows from the S. end of Moelwyn Bach, and for the next mile accompanies us, flowing N., while we are travelling S. It lies in a valley separated from the main valley by a little hill 900 ft. high. The railway traverses the lower slopes of this valley, without really ascending, and finally leaves it by a tunnel $\frac{3}{4}$ m. long. On emerging there is a beautiful peep of Ffestiniog village on its hill across the valley, with the Manods (L.). Soon *Dduallt* station is passed.

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Immediately afterwards the ground seems to fall away on the L., the train suddenly makes a sharp curve to the R., and, as if by magic, the whole beautiful vale of Ffestiniog from end to end is lying at our feet, about 500 ft. below. Beyond the wooded hills on the far side rise the fantastic outlines of the Rhinog group of mountains. This surprise picture is one of the great "moments" of the journey, but it is all too short, for the thick-growing fir trees hide the view (perhaps more than they did some years ago), until we approach the station of *Tan-y-Bwlch* ("under the pass," *i.e.* that on the road leading to Traeth Mawr). Here there is another view, mainly of the central part of the valley, with Maentwrog lying picturesquely in its snug corner. Then comes the greatest of the curves, since the railway bends all round the beautiful Tan-y-Bwlch hollow. This is a circular depression, some distance above the main valley, which contains a lovely lake, almost entirely surrounded by dense oak woods. This charming scene is well seen from above, as the railway circles round it. The station is just at the centre of the great bend. (Tourists who wish to see the valley are recommended to leave the train here. There is an obvious short cut, descending to the road by the lake. At the foot turn R., and a short but steep descent among trees leads to the valley, close to the Oakley Arms Hotel. For Maentwrog go past the hotel, turn L., cross the valley and bridge and then turn R. For description of valley see p. 266. For the Rhaiadr Du glen see next paragraph.)

After leaving Tan-y-Bwlch station, the railway resumes its great curve round the hollow, Moelwyn Bach standing up grandly above. Presently we are again close to the valley, and gain another peep of

Maentwrog. Then we pass close to the fine estate of Plâs, but trees interfere greatly with the view. When we can see the valley again, the Dwyryd is tidal, and is seen winding to the sea over a sandy bed, interspersed with rocks, and surrounded by low wooded hills. Meanwhile the railway has been descending, and at Penrhyn is little above the level of the village. Then we descend further to Mynffordd Junction, where we can change for the G.W.R. The last view on the railway is from the Traeth Mawr embankment. Traeth Mawr is a rich flat country, round which the great mountains stand, especially Moel Hebog, Snowdon, Cynicht, and Moelwyn. The terminus of Portmadoc is close to the harbour, but $\frac{3}{4}$ m. distant from the G.W.R. station (p. 236).

5. *The Rhaiadr Du Glen* (about $2\frac{1}{4}$ m. from Maentwrog, or $2\frac{3}{4}$ m. from Tan-y-Bwlch).—This is a deep-set and well-wooded gorge of the same type as the Cynfael, and as fine, or even finer. Start from Maentwrog by the road down the valley on the L. (the Harlech road), and in about $\frac{3}{4}$ m. turn L. into a lane, which leads up the glen with the stream some distance on the R. Avoid the branch leading R. to Ivy Bridge over the stream, and keep straight up the glen, past the farm Y Felin Rhyd Fach, where refreshments can be got. About $\frac{1}{2}$ m. further on take a cart track R. When this forks, just before an old lime-kiln, take the R.-hand branch for *Raven Fall*, along a tram-line. The fall is a sheer descent of about 30 ft., and lies deep below in an inaccessible hollow, so that it has to be seen from the top of a precipitous cliff. From this point it is best to return to the fork by the lime-kiln, and then take the L.-hand branch. A short cut, however, can be taken by a scrambling path. Presently the track enters a wood by a wicket gate,

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and proceeds to *Rhaiadr Du*, the principal fall. Here is a thoroughly charming picture. The water makes a curious twist in its descent to a deep dark pool, and is framed between steep rocks covered with oak. Though both waterfalls are well worth seeing, the general beauty of the whole glen is the chief charm. (See note at end of section 6.)

6. *Tomen-y-Mur (or Mur-y-Castell)* is the site of a Roman station, to which the Roman road Sarn Helen (p. 135) led nearly straight from Conovium. It must have been connected also with Segontium by a road, of which no traces are extant, but which doubtless ran on the lines of the present Beddgelert to Carnarvon road. Its name is unknown, since the "Hereri Mons" of the ordnance map comes from the forged Itinerary of "Richard of Cirencester." Hereri is clearly Eryri, the Welsh name for Snowdonia. The site is about $1\frac{1}{2}$ m. S.E. of the railway station at Maentwrog Junction, to be reached from Ffestiniog either by road or rail. Take the road leading S. from the station (into which a road coming up from Maentwrog soon runs R.). After a short half mile turn L. into a track, which crosses the line, and after a short mile on the moorland runs into the end of Sarn Helen, a little N. of the Roman station. The fort was about $\frac{1}{2}$ acre in extent, used obviously as a look-out post, and commanding a wide view in all directions. It was carefully built of unmortared stones. Part of the E. gateway is still to be seen. The "tomen" (*i.e.* mound) is of doubtful origin. It is possibly a mediæval addition. In 1095 the invading army of William Rufus concentrated here. Since it was already November, and the mountains of Snowdon lay unconquered before him, the king decided there was nothing to do but to retreat. In 1114 the forces of

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Henry I. again passed this way. (This ramble might be combined with visits to the waterfalls described in sections 2 and 5).

7. *Ffestiniog valley to Beddgelert*.—See description reverse way (p. 245).

8. *Blaenau Ffestiniog to Bettws-y-Coed* (14 m., see description the reverse way, p. 134).—The road starts N. from Blaenau Ffestiniog, and begins at once to climb among quarries. The top is 1263 ft., in a region of desolation. The nearer mountains are of little interest, Yr Allt Fawr (L.) (a name sometimes given to the rock plateau E. of Cynicht), and Moel Penamnen and Y Ro Wen (R.). The lower part of the descent lies pleasantly among woods. When the Lledr valley is reached descend it R. Meanwhile the railway has reached the valley by tunnelling through the neck separating the two valley heads.

9. *Ffestiniog village to Penmachno* (9½ m.).—The first 3 m. are on the upland Bala road (E.). In 1½ m. the old burial-place called *Beddau Gwyr Ardudwy* ("the graves of the men of Ardudwy"), is ½ m. N. A mile further *Llyn Morwynion* ("lake of the maidens") is also about ½ m. L. These two places are connected by a well-known legend. On the former spot the men of Ardudwy, who had carried off as wives some women from a neighbouring tribe, were overtaken by the incensed fathers and relations, and killed to a man. But they had already won the love of their captive wives, who, seeing their fate, all jumped into the lake and perished. On the R. are now the cataracts of *Cwm Rhaiadr*, the deep gorge of the upper Cynfael stream. At 3 m. we turn L. into a desolate mountain road, which reaches a height of 1590 ft. and descends presently to Penmachno (see pp. 133, 134). It is not fit for carriage or cycle.

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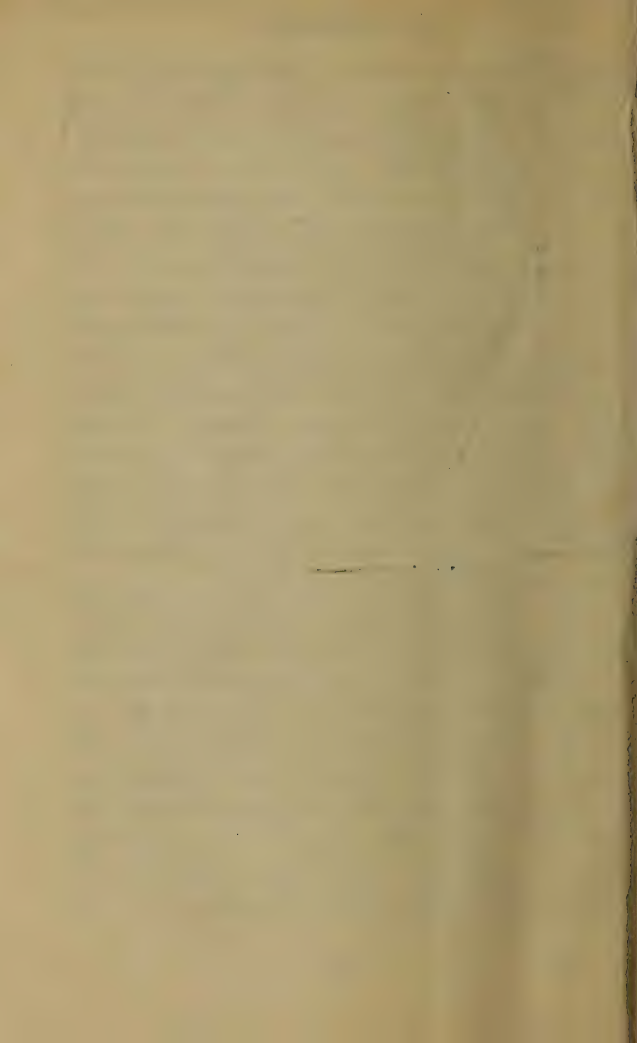
III. *The Ffestiniog Mountains.* 1. *Moelwyn* (see pp. 252-255 for description and view). (a) *From Tan-y-Grisiau by Cwm Orthin.*—After climbing to the Bwlch Cwm Orthin, turn straight up the mountain L. (see p. 254). (b) *From Tan-y-Grisiau by Llyn Trwstyllon.*¹—This is a shorter and more interesting route. Llyn Trwstyllon lies in a cwm on the E. side of the mountain, and, if we look S.W. from the station, we can see the stream from it forming a cascade close to an old waterwheel. This is the point to aim at. Walk along the rough hillside, ascending only slightly, until the stream is reached, then climb, with the stream L. till the tarn appears. It is a beautiful piece of water (1570 ft. above sea-level) in a fine rocky cwm lying between Moelwyn and Moelwyn Bach (L.), and with precipices reaching up both mountains. There is still a steep climb of 1000 ft. Keep R. of the tarn, then climb to the ridge, finally turning L. to the summit. (c) *From Tan-y-Bwlch.*—This, if considered as an ascent of Moelwyn, is a longer and more scrambling route, but it has the advantage of including *Moelwyn Bach*, a mountain 2334 ft. high, *i.e.* higher than Cynicht, and well worth a climb. Leave Tan-y-Bwlch station by the mountain road (p. 245), but before long turn R., and attack the side of Moelwyn Bach. The climb will be found both rough and steep. When the summit is gained, take the steep rocky descent leading to the narrow col between the two mountains. Llyn Trwstyllon lies in a deep hollow R., and there is a great cwm on the L. Then comes the final ascent to the top of Moelwyn.

2. *Cynicht* (see pp. 252-254 for description and view). (a) *From Tan-y-Grisiau by Cwm Orthin.*—After

¹ Or Llyn Stwlan (Ordnance map).

Bwlch Cwm Orthin is reached, take the route described the reverse way on p. 254. (b) *From Blaenau Ffestiniog by Yr Allt Fawr*.—Start N. by the pass to the Lledr valley (p. 273), and when the top is reached, climb L., keeping in a general S.W. direction, until the top of *Yr Allt Fawr* (2287 ft.) is reached. It is only a point rising a little above the curious elevated plateau already mentioned. One feature of this region is the large quantity of small tarns at high altitudes, which, however, are of little beauty, since they lie in nearly flat basins. The highest placed of these, *Llyn Conglog* (2002 ft. above sea-level), is now quite close to us, lying between us and the next elevated point on the plateau, *Moel Druman* (2152 ft.). Climb this point and continue N.W. on the main ridge in the direction of the next point, *Moel Lledr*, but, before reaching it, turn L., where the ridge forks, and proceed S.W. still keeping the summit level. Below us on the R. are the tarns of *Llyn yr Adar* and *Llyn Llgi*, the sources of the Nant, Mer stream. Keep R., along the ridge to the summit of *Cynicht*, its S.W. extremity.

3. *The Manods* (Manod Fawr, 2166, Manod Bach, c. 1600).—These mountains, lying E. of the upper Ffestiniog valley, may be called the advanced sentinels of Snowdonia to the E. They are round, humpy, and shapeless, but, having no precipices, are easy to climb. Start from the road half-way between the two Ffestiniogs (p. 264), where the lower slopes of Manod Bach are close. From the top of Manod Bach the way is plain, past the tarn *Llyn y Manod* to the summit of Manod Fawr. The view is not first-rate. The best points are the valley of Ffestiniog, the Moelwyn range, and the Merioneth mountains. A descent may be made to the Bala road (p. 273).



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